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ABSTRACT

The study explores the interpersonal tensions that develop in an exceptionally intimate and ambiguous cross-cultural relationship--that of Alaska's urban boarding home parents and the Athabascan Indian and Eskimo adolescents placed in their homes while attending urban secondary schools. Many of the students are from remote Alaskan villages which do not have high schools. From the perspective of social exchange theory, this study considers how the mutual exchange of rewards and costs in the boarding home parent-student relationship influences each party's level of satisfaction. Rather than focusing on the characteristics of rural students who successfully adjust to the urban environment, attention is given to the characteristics of boarding home parents who develop satisfactory relationships with students. The method of obtaining information consisted primarily of interviewing boarding home parents and students. Three recommendations were made: (1) a system of high school options is needed in rural secondary school planning; (2) as other secondary school alternatives become available to rural students, the Boarding Home Program should become much more selective in the types of boarding home parents chosen; and (3) the role of the boarding home parents should be defined in a way that confirms the status and legitimate authority of the student's natural parents. In the 3 appendixes, test scores are presented in tabular form, methodology is discussed, and the interview forms are shown. (FF)

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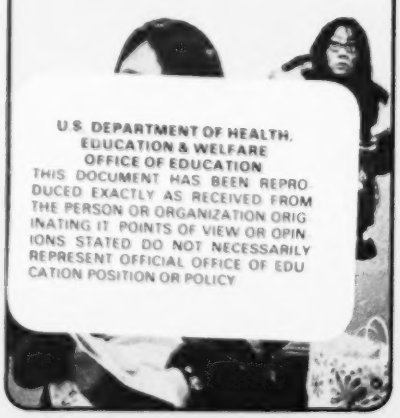

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ALASKA'S URBAN BOARDING HOME PROGRAM

Interpersonal Relationships Between Indian and Eskimo Secondary Students and Their Boarding Home Parents

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Judith Kleinfeld

Produced and Published in Collaboration with the
Center for Northern Educational Research,
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Special thanks are also due to Miss Irene Cleworth, the 1970-71 Fairbanks program school counselor, who provided many points about communication problems and strategies. I also appreciate the careful research of Mr. Jon Peterson, Director of the Rural Transition Center, and Mr. Jim Coats, Director of Psychological Services in the Anchorage Borough School District, who provided the dramatic information about achievement gains of Boarding Home Program students.

The Fairbanks Native Association Advisory Board, under the leadership first of Mrs. Kitty Harwood and then of Mrs. Betty Johnson, also provided many valuable suggestions concerning the direction of this research.

Dr. Charles Ray, who directed the project, contributed substantially to all phases of this work.

Finally, I would like to thank the many Boarding Home Program parents and students who were interviewed. I hope this work is of direct benefit to them. All errors in this report are, of course, my responsibility alone.

– JK
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PREFACE

The systematic study and analysis of Alaska's educational needs has recently been organized under the auspices of the Center for Northern Educational Research (CNER), at the University of Alaska. Created by resolution of the Board of Regents, the Center has, as its primary responsibility, research and program development associated with public education.

Prior to the inception of the Center, the Institute of Social, Economic and Government Research (ISEGR) had as one of its areas of research interest, the study of various aspects of Alaska education. Much of ISEGR's work in this area was performed in collaboration with the University of Alaska's Department of Education. Reports published by ISEGR include a survey of Alaska's higher education facilities, a review of the college orientation program for Native students, and a demographic review of Alaska's school enrollments. ISEGR will continue its interest in the problems and needs of education in Alaska in collaboration and cooperation with the Center for Northern Educational Research. It is appropriate, therefore, that the first educational research for which the Center has been responsible should be reported as a joint publication of CNER and ISEGR.

Dr. J.S. Kleinfeld of ISEGR prepared this report as a joint ISEGR-CNER publication. Dr. Kleinfeld has also written on the cognitive strengths of Eskimos and their implications for education and has examined the achievement profiles of Native ninth graders. Current research by Dr. Kleinfeld is concerned with further analysis of the cognitive development and secondary education of Alaska Native students.

The research reported here was conducted through the Center for Northern Educational Research, with support from the State Department of Education's Division of Regional Schools and Boarding Home Program, with Johnson-O'Malley funds. Dr. Charles Ray, of the Department of Education and CNER, served as project director and contributed substantially to all phases of the work. Dr. Kleinfeld served as project developer. A coordinating committee composed of a Native college student, a school board member, and representatives from the U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Division of Regional Schools and Boarding Home Program guided project activities.

The number and complexity of issues related to public education in Alaska become increasingly obvious. Treatment of the subject this paper reports on is not only a valuable contribution toward resolving some of the problems in the Regional Schools and Boarding Home Program, but it also serves as an example of the quality of work we may come to expect in the topics dealing with public education in Alaska still to be investigated.

April, 1972

Frank Darnell
Director, CNER

Victor Fischer
Director, ISEGR

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In Alaska's Boarding Home Program, rural students from small villages without high schools attend secondary school by living with a boarding home family. Most rural students in this program are Eskimo or Athabascan Indian, and the majority are placed with white families in urban areas. This study attempts to describe the subtle interpersonal tensions that develop in the boarding home parent-student relationship. It also attempts to identify the characteristics of successful and unsuccessful boarding home parents and ways of matching parents to students in a manner that maximizes mutual satisfaction.

The focus on the characteristics of boarding home parents who develop satisfactory relationships with students, rather than a focus on the characteristics of rural students who successfully adjust to the urban environment, was chosen because it seemed likely to be most useful to the program staff. Since the program accepts almost all applicants and other options are unavailable, little selection of students can occur. Selection of parents, however, is a major and routine program activity. It should be underscored, however, that rural students differ widely in their capacity to adjust to an urban boarding home, and some students have severe psychological problems that probably would prevent them from adapting to *any* urban home.

The method of obtaining information consisted primarily of interviewing boarding home parents and students. A detailed description of the methodology may be found in Appendix II.

Summary of Recommendations

As a result of the study, the investigators developed several recommendations that they believe will improve the Boarding Home Program and strengthen secondary education in Alaska.

I. A system of high school options is needed in rural secondary school planning.

Rural students and their parents should be able to choose the type of program — boarding home, area or regional high school, or local high school — that is most appropriate to their individual needs. Information should be made available on the different types of secondary school programs and their effects in order that choices can be made on an informed basis. Providing options to students within a region may much more successfully promote the growth of different types of students than the present regional planning approach, where all rural students must attend the particular secondary school program in their region.

II. As other secondary school alternatives become available to rural students, the Boarding Home Program should become much more selective in the types of boarding home parents chosen.

Improvements in the methods of selecting boarding home parents and in matching parents to students may greatly increase the success of the program. Parents who can communicate warmth to rural students in an open demonstrative way and who make only necessary demands in a style that allows the student to preserve a sense of autonomy should be selected. These parents are most likely to be successful. Cold, authoritarian parents should be eliminated from the program as they tend to destroy students' self-esteem and cause them to rebel against even legitimate demands on their behavior. Boarding home parents who live a village life style in the city should be used with caution. They may offer a desirable home for new, stable students from traditional villages, or for students who are adult men, but they find it difficult to influence the behavior of those students enticed by city excitements.

Boarding home parents should be matched with rural students on the basis of many criteria, especially that of the congruency of the parents' and the students' goals. Boarding home parents who are achievement oriented may provide especially useful help to similarly achievement oriented students, although they may be unsuccessful with rural students who have other concerns.

III. The role of the boarding home parents should be defined in a way that confirms the status and legitimate authority of the student's natural parents.

Boarding home parents should be advised to treat the rural student not "like their own child," but rather as the student's natural parents "would like to have him treated." Such a philosophy would encourage greater communication between the boarding home parents and natural parents, thus avoiding many problems and maintaining the legitimate position of the natural parents.

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ALASKA'S URBAN BOARDING HOME PROGRAM

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

When asked what happens when people from two different cultures meet, an old Apache laconically observed, "Bad feelings" (Wax & Thomas, 1961). The mutual misinterpretations and other problems that indeed develop in relationships between members of different cultural groups have led to a vast literature on the social norms of other nations and also to a variety of training programs designed specifically to increase Americans' skills in cross-cultural situations. In contrast, little attention has been given to the very similar problems that occur when members of the dominant culture engage in face-to-face encounters with members of minority cultures, such as American Indians and Eskimos.[1]

This paper explores the interpersonal tensions that develop in an exceptionally intimate and ambiguous cross-cultural relationship — that of Alaska's urban boarding home parents to the Athabascan Indian

[1]Ethnographies of Eskimo and Indian groups and discussions of research methodology often touch briefly upon questions of interpersonal relationships (Vallee, 1967; De Poncins, 1941; Murphy & Hughes, 1965). One excellent study is available which analyzes the difficulties American Indians and white people have merely in talking to each other (Wax & Thomas, 1961). Others attempt to give practical suggestions to whites working with Indians and Eskimos in such roles as community change agent (Pollaca, 1962), doctor (Kemnitzer, 1967), or teacher (Bureau of Indian Affairs, 1970; Kleinfeld, 1971). These types of cross-cultural interactions differ from the boarding home parent-student relationship because the scope of the interaction is limited and the objectives relatively clear.

and Eskimo adolescents placed in their homes while attending secondary schools. Many of these students come from remote Alaskan villages, and, although adjusting to an urban environment with its mechanisms, noise, speed, and crowds causes initial difficulties for them, their more fundamental and enduring problems concern the interpersonal area. These revolve around relationships with white people — their teachers, school peers, and especially their boarding home parents.

Coming as they do from small villages where interpersonal relationships provide the entertainment and drama of life, and from cultural groups where social cohesion is of great importance to survival (Spindler & Spindler, 1957), Indian and Eskimo students tend to be extremely sensitive to the nuances of interactions. White adults who become boarding home parents are generally less attuned to the interpersonal dimension and rarely recognize that basic issues, such as loss of status or the search for emotional support, underlie many surface conflicts.

From the perspective of social exchange theory, this paper considers how the mutual exchange of rewards and costs in the boarding home parent-student relationship influences each party's level of satisfaction. This information may be useful to prospective boarding home parents in developing mutually satisfying relationships with students. A typology of boarding home parents that suggests successful and unsuccessful types is also presented. Such information may be useful to Boarding Home Program staff in selecting parents and matching them with appropriate students.

While the focus is on the specific relationship between the boarding home parent and the student, similar problems occur in any type of cross-cultural relationship and, indeed, in any interpersonal relationship. People are often unaware of the covert messages concerning affect, status, and power that they send and receive in interactions overtly concerned with other issues. Increased awareness of these covert messages and how they are communicated is especially important in cross-cultural relationships because of the heightened sensitivity of both parties in an unfamiliar interaction and because social symbols differ across cultures. Sensitivity to these aspects of

interpersonal relationships may increase the effectiveness of westerners attempting to work in many roles with members of a different culture.

The Boarding Home Program

Alaska's Boarding Home Program was established in 1966 in order to provide a secondary school education within Alaska for rural students from areas without a local high school. From a mere 115 students in 1966-67, the program mushroomed to over 1,100 students in 1970-71 (see Table 1). This substantial growth resulted from several forces: (1) pressures to educate Alaska students in Alaska rather than in boarding schools in Oregon and Oklahoma, (2) the slow rate of construction of dormitories at regional high schools within Alaska, and (3) the increasing number of rural students who enroll in secondary school (see Figure 1). The program is presently the *only* available

TABLE 1

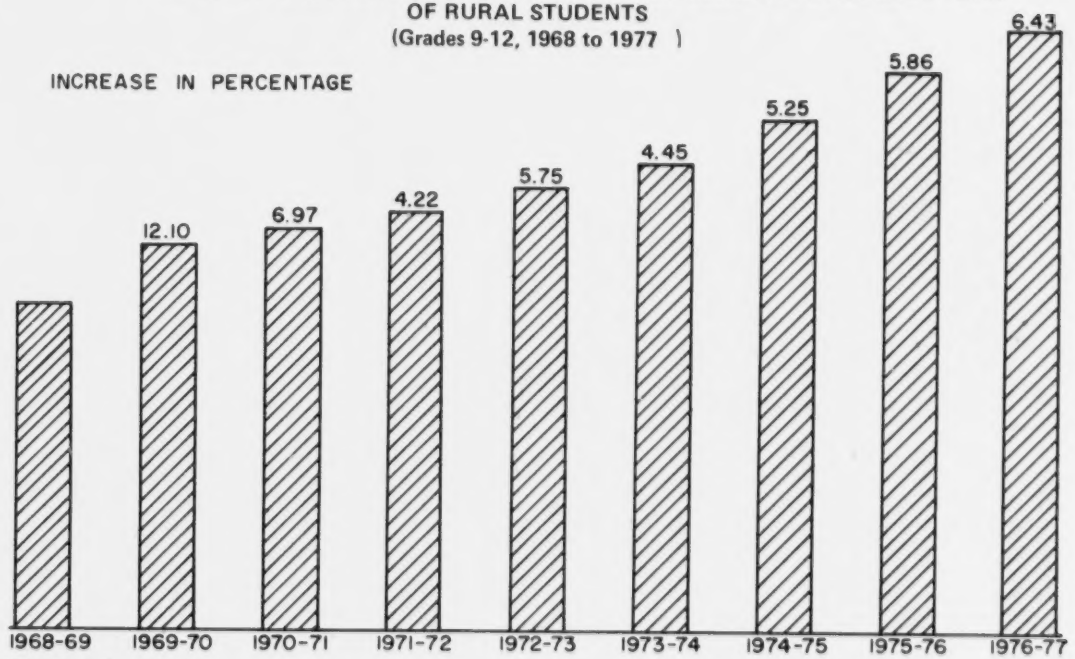
ENROLLMENT AND DROP-OUT IN BOARDING HOME PROGRAM 1966-1972

	ENROLLMENT	DROP-OUT
1966-67	108	22%
1967-68	256	14.4%
1968-69	415	11.6%
1969-70	741	11.6%
1970-71	1120	16.7%

The statistics from 1966-70 with the exception of 1971 drop-outs have been taken from Virginia MacEntree's Master's Thesis at Alaska Methodist University which was based on a search of Boarding Home Program records (MacEntree, 1969). Later statistics were obtained from the Boarding Home Program Office. It is important to caution others not to compare Boarding Home Program drop-out figures with drop-out figures from other secondary school programs since methods of computing drop-out often differ.

FIGURE 1

PROJECTED ENROLLMENT AND PERCENTAGE OF INCREASE BY SCHOOL YEAR OF RURAL STUDENTS
(Grades 9-12, 1968 to 1977)



	1968-69	1969-70	1970-71	1971-72	1972-73	1973-74	1974-75	1975-76	1976-77
Enrollment	3,460	3,948	4,223	4,401	4,654	4,861	5,116	5,416	5,764
Increase		488	275	178	253	207	255	300	348

SOURCE: A Prospectus for Rural Education in Alaska, Office of Research and Publication, Alaska Department of Education, January, 1969.

secondary school program for many rural students. Moreover, the program has finally eliminated the secondary school bottleneck caused by lack of dormitory facilities and has made a high school education available for any rural applicant.

Administration and Secondary School Placement

The program is administered by the Department of Education's Division of Regional Schools and Boarding Home Program. In the Fairbanks area, the Fairbanks Native Association has formed an advisory board that has a major role in selecting program staff and deciding policy questions.

Applications on which rural students state their preference for enrolling in particular boarding schools or in particular boarding home program communities are sent to the central office in Anchorage. Then, in cooperation with the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), the administrative staff assigns students to a community or to a state or BIA boarding school. Because different students may have different concerns, there is much diversity among rural students in selecting a secondary school program. Choices of a particular school program are made by the students primarily because friends and relatives attend, although some students choose schools because they are close to home and others choose schools located in a city because of a desire to see what a city is like. Although it was not previously possible, students in 1971-72 generally received their first choice of program.

Boarding Home Family Selection

Most students in the Boarding Home Program are Eskimos and Athabascan Indians (see Table 2). Because the majority of these students attend school in predominantly white urban centers, such as Anchorage and Fairbanks, where there are enough families and school space to absorb them, most of them are placed with white families. Some students, however, do live with urban Native families, and, in Native areas, the majority of students live with Native families.

TABLE 2

AREA AND ETHNIC GROUP DISTRIBUTION OF STUDENTS IN REGIONAL SCHOOLS AND BOARDING HOME PROGRAM, 1970

September 1970

Area	Percentage of total enrollment		Ethnic Group		Percentage
Anchorage	355	26.9%	Aleut	138	10.5%
Beltz Dorm	158	11.9%	Athabascan	267	20.3%
Bethel	97	7.3%	Caucasion	62	4.7%
Dillingham	58	4.4%	Eskimo	836	63.7%
Fairbanks	244	18.5%	Thlinget	8	.6%
Kenai Borough	54	4.1%			
Kodiak	138	10.4%			
Matanuska-Susitna Borough	46	3.4%			
McGrath	54	4.1%			
Southeastern	34	2.5%			
Special Programs	31	2.3%			
Tok	48	3.6%			
*TOTALS	1317	99.4%		1311	99.8%

These statistics include students enrolled in regional schools at Beltz and Kodiak as well as Boarding Home Program students. Figures were collected by Bridget March of the Division of Regional Schools and Boarding Home Program.

Kenai Borough includes Homer, Kenai, Ninilchik and Seward; Mat-su Borough includes Palmer and Wasilla; Southeastern includes Hoonah, Juneau, Ketchikan, Petersburg and Sitka and Special Programs includes Adak, Cordova, Glenallen, Iguigig, Teller and Valdez.

*No SHOWS not included.

Family selection and student placements are made by local program coordinators in each large program community. There are very specific health and safety requirements for the physical attributes of the boarding home. In 1971-72, homes were licensed according to state regulations. Other standards for family selection are defined in general terms, for example, willingness "to accept the student and to help him to be a part of the family" (Department of Education, 1970, p. 7). While the family selection criteria of individual coordinators differ, they generally search for parents who, for example, understand teenagers, react flexibly, have an appreciation of cultural differences, and have good relationships within their own family. Coordinators tend to be extremely sensitive to parents' motives for taking a boarding home student, since popular opinion condemns those parents who "take the student for the money." In 1970-71, each boarding home family received $150 per month to cover the expenses of caring for the student.[2] Although parents are not expected to make a profit, for those who board several students or have many children of their own, an additional student adds little incremental expense and some profit can be made.

Experienced coordinators develop great sophistication in selecting parents and placing appropriate students with them. However, the coordinators are often forced to include homes they recognize as marginal because of the tremendous number of students who must be accommodated if they are to receive any high school education at all. Also, because other educational alternatives are often unavailable and because of a reluctance to exclude any rural school applicant, the coordinators may be forced, against their own judgment, to place students with social and emotional problems in boarding homes.[3]

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[2]These payments, while affected by wage-price controls, were intended to change in 1971-72 to take into account cost of living differences in different areas of Alaska and to decrease the incentive for parents to board large numbers of students by reducing payments for more than two students. Placing two students together is desirable since they provide emotional support for each other, but placing large numbers of students in a home usually places too great a strain on the household and prevents parents from giving sufficient attention to each student.

[3]Upon the recommendations of a psychiatrist who worked with the Boarding Home Program, this policy is being changed. Students with severe social and emotional problems, as determined by psychiatric examination during a boarding home year, will not be admitted to the program in following years.

Objectives

It is essential to distinguish clearly between the objectives of Alaska's Boarding Home Program and the objectives of other programs that are similar in form — the boarding of an Indian student with a white family — but vastly different in goals. The *only* purpose of the Alaska program and the similar program in Canada (Snider, 1969) is to make available a secondary school education for Indian and Eskimo students in areas without high schools. Individual boarding home parents, however, sometimes have different interpretations of the objectives of the program. Some, for example, see the acculturation of the student as the main purpose. Many problems occur when boarding home parents view their mission primarily in this way, an interpretation with abundant historical precedent.

Historically, boarding home programs, usually called "outing" systems, were used quite specifically to indoctrinate Indian students in white ways. Usually, these programs were attached to Indian boarding schools. In the early colonial period, Reverend John Sergeant established such an experimental "outing system" whereby Indian students were placed with Puritan families during vacation periods. This practice was continued in the 19th century at the Carlisle School (Berry, 1969). Similarly, from the 1920's until the 1960's, the Sherman Institute outing system, where Indian students worked during the summer while living with white families, was heralded as the strongest and most effective method of promoting acculturation (Hall, 1970). The Lutheran Social Services established such a summer foster home program again at the Flandreau Indian School in 1970. While the current emphasis on Native self-determination has led to a more sophisticated rationale — that of providing students with choices between reservation and urban life — the tone of the program clearly indicated an underlying acculturative missionary spirit (Little, 1970).

In addition to the above programs sponsored by boarding schools, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints has established an extensive foster home program whereby about 5,000 Indian students in the western United States and Georgia live with Mormon families during the school year. Although the official goal of the program is "leadership development" (Foster Parent Guide, 1965), the boarding home parents serve (without any financial compensation) because of

religious duties and objectives. As Payne (1970) explains, Mormons consider American Indians to be Lamanites, and "a charge is made to those who accept the Book of Mormon as the truth to offer themselves and their help in bringing these Lamanites or American Indians back to the knowledge of God which their ancestors had."

Foster home programs with such acculturative and religious goals are being regarded as increasingly controversial by national Indian leaders, who fear that students will lose their identification with their culture and with their own families. While Alaska's program does not have official acculturative goals, the questions of how to maintain identification with Native culture and the student's family need to be considered.

Evaluation

No formal evaluation of the Boarding Home Program has been made in Alaska or in other areas that have similar programs. However, educational theory and the few scattered bits of evidence that are available suggest that the urban boarding home experience may be a valuable educational option for certain types of Native students.

A rural student in an urban boarding home program is usually exposed to a second curriculum, the life-style of a family successfully adapted to an urban community. Through informal observational learning, the student has the opportunity to acquire an intimate understanding of urban roles and ways of controlling the world. Since traditional Native groups tend to have a more observational than verbal style of learning (Cazden & John, 1968; Kleinfeld, 1970), this second curriculum may be taught by more powerful methods than are used in a formal school setting. Moreover, such information is subtle and situational, difficult to teach in any school.

Not only do students who live in an urban family situation have a greater opportunity to acquire an understanding of new behavioral roles, they also have the opportunity to experiment with them with fewer restraining pressures from their peer group. As Berreman (1966) points out in his study of an Aleut community, the peer group may exert strong sanctions on the ambitious from identifying with and

imitating the behavior of members of the dominant culture. A boarding home family situation avoids creating a monolithic peer group and provides other sources of emotional support and approval to the student who wishes to try out new roles. The student may also receive extensive English language exposure, intensive individual counseling, and many other experiences conducive to achievement. The "program staff-to-student" ratio in the Boarding Home Program may be two adults to one or, at most, a few students.

In brief, the program exposes the students to the information and behavior conducive to success in urban life and provides an arena where he may experiment with new roles in some comfort. However, whether these factors should be considered "benefits" depends on the personal goals and abilities of the student. For those who have the desire and ability to work in a western occupational role or in an urban area, the experience can help to provide subtle, yet critical, skills, especially in the social area. In contrast, for those who desire a village life style, it may be highly dysfunctional to become accustomed to the personal comforts of urban living and a western life style and valúe perspective. And, since urbanites often brand the student who returns home to the village as a failure, the effect may be radically lower self-esteem.

Moreover, for many students, the crisis of leaving the strong emotional bonds of the primary group produces severe emotional problems. These may retard learning and negate any possible educational advantages of the experience. A high school experience in the home village or in a dormitory environment, which provides strong emotional support from a Native peer group, may be preferable for these students.

In sum, from a theoretical perspective, the Boarding Home Program, in contrast to boarding school or village school experience, seems likely to result in higher achievement, especially in the area of English language skills, and also in increased learning of urban social and occupational roles. It also creates much greater emotional stress, which may lead to high drop-out rates, especially in the initial adjustment period (see Table 1). The value of achievement and social learning gains must be weighed against the effects of the program experience on personal self-esteem and mental health and must also be

considered in relation to the student's abilities and goals. For those students who desire an urban life style, the program provides a unique and powerful educational experience.

Very little empirical data on the effects of the Boarding Home Program experience are available, although a study sponsored by the Division of Regional Schools and Boarding Home Program to assess the effects of different types of secondary school experiences on achievement, mental health, and identity formation is in progress at the Center for Northern Education. However, a few scattered bits of information can be reviewed concerning the achievement of students in the program. Each source of information has important limitations and cannot be considered substantial evidence. Nonetheless, the sources do point to possibly dramatic gains by boarding home students in the area of academic achievement.

Stanford Achievement Tests were given to fifty-eight 9th and 10th grade boarding home students in Anchorage at the middle and end of the 1970-71 school year.[4] (See Appendix I, Table I-1.) On the average, they gained a full school year in achievement during a mere four-month period. In short, boarding home students showed a remarkably high achievement gain of over twice the usual rate.

School grades for boarding home students in Fairbanks, during a year when almost no special classes were available for rural students, were analyzed by Cleworth (1971). School grades are, of course, fallible indicators of achievement, since teachers very likely give some preferential treatment to rural students. However, it is interesting that these grades follow a normal distribution: no pile-up of D and F marks occurred (see Appendix I, Tables I-3 & I-4 and Figure I-1). Even when grades in major academic subjects alone are considered, about 62 per

[4] In this study as well, 46 Anchorage Boarding Home Program students who showed a low verbal-high performance intelligence test score pattern were given intelligence tests at the beginning and end of the year (Peterson, 1971). These tests indicated an average growth of 7 points in I.Q. scores (see Appendix I, Table I-1). Greatest gains occurred in the vocabulary, comprehension, arithmetic, and block design sub-tests. These results cannot be used to more than suggest possible effects of Boarding Home Program experience in removing cultural bias deficits from intelligence test performance because of the statistical problem of regression toward the mean. Students selected because they score very low on a particular test such as verbal intelligence will generally score higher on a re-test because of chance factors.

cent of the grades are C or above. This should be encouraging to rural students, who know that they are competing against students from the dominant culture who have had urban elementary experience and whose language is English. Such performance should give rural students confidence to attend college, and indeed, a follow-up of the 25 graduates from the 1969-70 Fairbanks program indicated that about 25 per cent (6 students had enrolled in college (Cleworth, 1971).

In addition to academic achievement gains, boarding home parents, students, teachers and coordinators frequently point to dramatic changes that occur in the social behavior of new boarding home students over the school year and especially during their second year in the program. According to these anecdotal reports, the typical student who arrives afraid of white people unable to talk to strangers, and unskilled in navigating through the urban environment or in planning things on his own often becomes a self-confidant participant in urban life. The substantial growth on the Vineland Social Maturity Test, which primarily measures acquisition of western social skills, by 25 boarding home students who attended the Rural Transition Center helps to corroborate these anecdotes (see Appendix I, Figure I-2).

It cannot be over-emphasized that these spotty statistics and anecdotal reports do not constitute an evaluation of the Boarding Home Program. However, the available information is useful in that it suggests the possibility that substantial gains in achievement and social skills are produced by the program.

Future

While originally developed as a temporary emergency measure to educate large numbers of rural high school students in Alaska, the Boarding Home Program will probably remain a major secondary school program for rural students. Dormitory construction at regional and area high school sites is proceeding slower than planned. Moreover, dormitory facilities presently planned are not sufficient for the estimated secondary school population in the coming years, and the program is expected to accommodate the overflow (Department of Education, 1971). In addition, Boarding Home Program staff generally feel that the program is "working," and program maintenance pressures increase the probability that the program will survive.

CHAPTER II

SOCIAL EXCHANGE THEORY AND THE BOARDING HOME PARENT–STUDENT RELATIONSHIP

Social exchange theory offers a useful perspective on the question of why certain boarding home program parent-student relationships result in mutual satisfaction and a continued relationship while others do not. The theory suggests that any interpersonal relationship will be evaluated positively and maintained when the rewards each partner receives in the relationship exceed the costs he must pay (see Shaw & Costanzo, 1970, pp. 69-103; Secord & Backman, 1964, pp. 233-323). The rewards and costs involved in an interpersonal relationship include not only material exchanges of goods and services, but also emotional exchanges, for example, rewards of feeling liked or costs of feeling rejected. In the relationship between an employer and an employee, for example, not only money for work, but also feelings and status messages are being exchanged. In evaluating the relationship and deciding whether to continue it, the employee is likely to weigh, in part, the material reward of money against the cost of his time and work. However, he will also weigh, although not necessarily consciously, whether he is receiving emotional rewards, such as the feeling that he is liked and valued by his employer. Similarly, the employer will weigh both his own material and emotional rewards and costs in deciding his degree of satisfaction with the relationship and whether he should continue it.

Social exchange theory also suggests that a person evaluates his satisfaction in a particular interpersonal relationship by comparing

the rewards and costs he obtains in it with the rewards and costs he has obtained in similar relationships in the past. He also evaluates the relationship by observing the rewards and costs persons in similar situations are obtaining. In addition, whether the person decides to continue the relationship depends on his estimates of the outcomes that will occur in the alternative courses of action available to him. These factors together establish his individual "comparison level." Since people's comparison levels differ, a relationship satisfying to one individual is not necessarily satisfying to another. Thus, a pretty girl, accustomed to very status-enhancing relationships with members of the opposite sex and perceiving many alternative relationships available to her, may look negatively upon and discontinue a particular relationship that an unattractive girl, accustomed to less status-enhancing relationships and perceiving no other options, might evaluate positively and seek to maintain.

Therefore, in attempting to explain why some boarding home parent-student relationships are positively evaluated and maintained by both parties while others are not, it is necessary to consider:

1) the rewards and costs received in the relationship by the boarding home parents;
2) the rewards and costs received in the relationship by the boarding home student;
3) the comparison level and other alternatives available to the boarding home parents; and
4) the comparison level and other alternatives available to the boarding home student.

From the perspective of the boarding home parent, the material rewards available in the relationship are usually of little significance. The parent can usually make only a minimal monetary profit in the transaction and the students' school obligations prevent large amounts of household work. In addition, people with such material rewards as dominant motives for taking a student are screened out of the program. For this reason, boarding home parents receive their primary rewards from other aspects of the relationship, such as enjoyment of the student's reactions to urban life or enhancement of the parent's status by validating his self-image as a generous and civic-minded person. Where the student denies such emotional

rewards to the boarding home parent, the parent is likely to become dissatisfied with the relationship because he is paying high costs in caring for the student, worrying about his problems and whereabouts, and disrupting established family routines.

From the perspective of the Boarding Home Program student as well, the material rewards available in the relationship, such as a luxurious home and expensive food, tend to be of little value since students often prefer their customary style of life at home. The primary rewards available to the student in the boarding home parent-student relationship, thus, also come to lie in emotional exchanges related to feelings of being liked and valued, especially by feared, high status white people. Where the boarding home parent denies such emotional rewards to the student, the student is likely to become highly dissatisfied because he is paying high costs in leaving his family and the comfort of an established lifestyle and is living with strangers who demand conformity to new patterns of living.

Satisfaction level and continuance in a boarding home parent-student relationship depends, as previously discussed, not only on their rewards as compared to their costs, but also on the student's and parent's comparison levels and perceptions of available alternatives. Those students, for example, who have had extremely warm and indulged relationships with their own parents, and who expect these relationships to continue should they decide to return to the village, are much more likely to withdraw from a particular boarding home parent-student relationship than those who come from families where they are rejected or overworked. Since the alternative of transferring homes or returning to the village is readily available to most students and the alternative of withdrawing their home from the Boarding Home Program or taking a different student is readily available to most parents, the boarding home parent-student relationship tends to be quite unstable, as indicated by the large number of students who transfer and drop out.

While recognizing the importance of a student's or parent's individual comparison level and perception of available alternatives in determining his satisfaction, it is perhaps more useful to focus on the exchanges of rewards and costs that occur in the relationship itself. Boarding home parents can do little to change an individual student's

comparison level, but they can substantially change his rewards and costs in the relationship.

Changing the rewards and costs of the student, however, is not easy because social exchanges between members of different cultural groups lead to a number of special problems. First, members of different cultures often erroneously evaluate their costs in a relationship because they misinterpret the meaning of social signs. A person's estimation of the rewards and costs of a relationship are based not only on the concrete effects of the actions of the other person, but also on his interpretation of the symbolic meaning of these actions. When a person is late, for example, a member of western culture may consider this action a high cost not because a few minutes' delay caused great inconvenience, but rather because being late in a culture that places an extraordinary high value on punctuality is interpreted as a highly status-reducing act (Hall, 1959). A member of a different culture, however, may place no such symbolic meaning on being late and interpret the western cultural member's resultant anger as a sign that the westerner does not like him personally. Second, it is difficult for each member of the cross-cultural interaction to evaluate the rewards and costs that he is sending to the other person because he has difficulty in reading the subtle, often non-verbal signals through which a member of a different cultural group makes known his gratification or discomfort (Hall, 1964). Third, even when one member of a cross-cultural relationship does become aware that his behavior has been misinterpreted and is causing unintended costs for the other, he may not know how to correct the situation because he does not know what behavior the other cultural member will consider rewarding.

These processes of cross-cultural signal crossing, where each party misinterprets the symbolic meaning of the other's behavior, is unaware of his misinterpretation, or, if aware, does not know how to correct it, are primary causes of unsatisfactory relationships between white boarding home parents and Indian and Eskimo students. The following sections discuss such problems in the affect, status, power, and communication dimensions of the boarding home parent-student relationship and describe the behavior of successful and unsuccessful boarding home parents.

Affect Structure

That boarding home students were anxious to be liked by their boarding home parents was not especially surprising. Securing the approval of members of the dominant culture was extremely important to many students. Affection from the boarding home parents was especially important in a period of emotional deprivation caused by leaving the close relationships of the village primary group. Parental affection, therefore, was the most valuable reward the student could obtain in the boarding home parent-student relationship.

The extent of boarding home parents' anxiety about whether or not the students liked them was surprising in view of the fact that the well established parents should be more secure in their self-calculations. Many parents felt uneasy about relating to a member of another cultural group and viewed the student's acceptance of them as a sign that they really were good people. Moreover, the need to be liked by other people has been identified as a fundamental American value orientation (Stewart, 1969). People from other countries often consider Americans insatiable in requiring tremendous assurance from other people that they are indeed liked.

Like detectives, both parents and students tended to search each other's behavior for clues to their feelings about them. One mother, for example, noted that her Eskimo student was wearing sunglasses and discussed with great agitation whether the girl wore them to avoid seeing her. Fearing rejection, yet expecting to be rejected by a member of a different culture, both boarding home parents and students tended to misinterpret each other's behavior and perceived rejection and prejudice where none existed.

Ironically, it was those boarding home parents who tried the hardest to secure the student's immediate affection who were most likely to perceive rejection instead. Some parents tried to obtain instant affection through expensive gifts of clothes and trips. When the student took the gifts as a matter of course since "all white people are rich," the parents were crestfallen and angry. Other parents cooked elaborate dinners for their student and felt rebuffed when the student forgot to come home for dinner or ate only the meat and bread to which he was accustomed in the village.

The social sign that convinced many parents that the student did not like them was his desire to spend as much time as possible in the city with his friends and as little time as possible at home. To some extent, the parents were right in interpreting the student's avoidance as a sign of his discomfort in the home. While the parents interpreted this behavior as dislike of them personally, this was rarely the case. Especially those Indian and Eskimo students who had never before left small villages felt extreme fear and awe of strange whites.

Students' intense fears in the white boarding home probably derived in part from subconscious anxieties aroused by the discipline methods used by village parents, who often warn a naughty child that they will give him away to white people if he does not behave (Briggs, 1970; Oswalt, 1963; Milan, 1964). The boarding home situation, where the child is in reality given to white parents, quite possibly arouses latent terrors and even the feeling that being placed in the boarding home is a punishment for being somehow bad. Fearful of the white parents, students were often terrified of being in their homes, where they might make a mistake, break something, or hurt someone.[1] As one student put it:

> I didn't want to become involved in family activities because I felt out of place in being in a home where all the people were white, and I was Native. I didn't know how to act so I just didn't want to get involved. So what I did most of the time I'd want to get away from the home and get outside and pass time that way so I wouldn't be burdened with how I should do things while I'm staying in the home.

Students' fears of making mistakes were more intense in those boarding homes where family life was more formal, and students accustomed to the casualness of village life perceived what parents considered minor routines to be formal occasions. As one student said:

> Seems like everything they did was ordered, that they did things according to a system . . . you had breakfast at a certain hour and the table was all laid out and arranged every time a person was going to eat. You'd have the plates arranged in a certain manner, forks and spoons arranged in order all on the table.

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[1] Some students were reluctant to babysit because they feared the white child might die. The death of small children is not a rare occurence in the village. Boarding home parents often misinterpreted this fear as ungrateful laziness.

Students' feelings of discomfort in the home were exacerbated by the shock of different cultural patterns. For example, some students, accustomed to seeing heavy drinking in the village and fearing that they would be placed with drinking parents, became terrified when the boarding home father had a beer with a neighbor. Athabascan students, coming from a culture that places strong taboos against what western cultural members usually consider mild forms of nudity, might become upset when boarding home parents violated these norms. Indeed, one occasion where a boarding home father had put on only his underwear to quiet a crying baby in the middle of the night greatly upset the boarding home students and caused extreme concern in their home community. Eskimo students, coming from a culture where overt expressions of sexual affection between married adults are not the norm, often were shocked at boarding home parents' "silly kissing."

While such pressures pushed the student away from the boarding home family, the student's search for emotional support in the crisis of leaving primary group ties and entering a demanding new setting pulled him toward peers and any Natives from his home area. While physically remaining in the city, students attempted psychologically to return to the village. They would "go home" by spending every possible moment in the company of friends from home. They would visit Natives from their home town who lived in Fairbanks. They would haunt the bars, where they could meet other Natives and where they knew that people from home would eventually come.

Students typical desire to spend most of their time in the company of peers rather than parents, in the city and not in the home, derived not only from initial discomfort in the home and the search for emotional support, but also from very different cultural norms concerning the appropriate relationship between a parent and an adolescent and the appropriate way to spend leisure time. The relationship between parent and adolescent in the village is traditionally one of reserve (Parker, 1962). This traditional detachment has been intensified by the culture change occurring rapidly among the young, where the students' westernized outlook can be shared with peers, but not with parents (Chance, 1966). Thus,

while boarding home parents often expected the parent-adolescent confidant style of relationship that is an ideal, although often unrealized, of western middle class culture, students did not. Such relationships were appropriate only with peers. Similarly, recreation in the village, unlike the city, does not generally take place within the home. As one Eskimo boarding home mother, who urged her students to go downtown frequently, pointed out, life in the village is not home-based. "You always go out for recreation and walk around. There's nothing fun to do in the home." To many students from small villages, the city is an exciting place and they cruise expectantly, literally awaiting the adventures that they have seen in the movies.

Students' desire to spend time away from the boarding home, therefore, stemmed from many sources — discomfort in the new setting, different norms about parent-adolescent relationships, different norms about use of leisure — and did not necessarily signify personal rejection of the boarding home parents. The students' behavior, however, often conflicted with boarding home parents' ideals of family life. Boarding home parents tended to hold middle-class values of family togetherness as expressed by spending leisure time with other family members and going to church together. In addition, many families nurtured a fantasy of cross-cultural family togetherness with the white parents and their children sitting cozily with their Indian or Eskimo child discussing their different cultures. Since fulfilling this fantasy was an important reward for parents in the relationship, boarding home parents often became angry when the student would not "be part of the family." Parents often demanded that the student spend most of his time at home with them and might even warn him that other people would not like him if he visited too much, thereby unintentionally reinforcing students' fears of rejection in the new situation.

From their perspective, as well, boarding home students found ample evidence to confirm fears that the boarding home parents did not like them. Having experienced rejection and prejudice in past relationships with whites, many students expected similar treatment from their boarding home parents. Even when parents held no such feelings, many students interpreted their experience as confirming

these expectations. One student, for example, called up a counselor hysterically to tell her that the boarding home parents had locked her out of the house. The counselor found that the parent had expected the girl to return home much later and had planned to be home at that time. More experienced boarding home students often remarked that one of their major problems in the boarding home was "misinterpreting how the boarding home parents felt. At first, I thought that they were prejudiced, that they had bad feelings toward me. It took me a long while to rule out that they didn't."

Students often interpreted the boarding home parents' attempts to socialize them into western family routines as proof positive that the parents disliked them. Parents often made a series of demands upon students that the parents regarded as trivial but that the student interpreted as implying disapproval and dislike: "Eat your vegetable, do you want to get scurvy?" "Turn off the lights." "Hang up your clothes in the closet." Since parents frequently did not understand the bases of the students' behavior, they often did imply the view that students behavior was "primitive," rather than a rational response to the different living conditions in the village. Coming from hunting cultures, for example, Indians and Eskimos regard large quantities of meat as a diet for a human being and view vegetables and salad as inferior stuff. Students may be accustomed to leaving the lights on because in the village it may be necessary to use electricity continually in order to maintain the generator. Clothes may be stored in suitcases because village homes have no closets. It was difficult for either boarding home parents or students to view different ways of doing things as appropriate in different circumstances rather than as signs of inadequacy.

Achievement oriented parents communicated more subtle but even more powerful messages of rejection by their insistence on "improving" the students. Such parents had often taken a boarding home student from civic-minded, "do-gooder" motives. In accordance with western cultural beliefs about the controllability of the environment, these parents regarded the student as a piece of clay that they could mold into a "Native leader," a "Native college student," or, at the very least, a "Native beauty contest winner." The boarding home student, in short, became the parents' new civic

project. Parents embarked with immediate gusto upon re-making the student, providing financial generosity — hair appointments, tutoring services, special lessons, etc. Students placed in these homes were often aware of the boarding home parents' good intentions. Indeed, the realization that it was well-motivated and not prejudiced people who were trying so hard to change him might thoroughly convince the student that he really was inadequate and justifiably disliked.

For the boarding home student, another social sign, although one largely subconscious, that the parents did not like him occurred when parents limited food. Food is of great importance in Eskimo and Indian psychology. Students come from hunting cultures where food can be scarce and food anxieties are prominant (Murphy & Hughes, 1965). Eating is one of the great delights of life. Most important, affection is often expressed in the tangible form of food (Briggs, 1970). Since village parents give a child food to appease him, students also are accustomed to using food as a substitute gratification in periods of stress, such as entering the boarding home situation. In addition, the propensity of most teenagers to consume tremendous quantities of food is well known.

Boarding home parents frequently did not understand the importance of food to students, especially in a period of emotional deprivation. Parents interpreted students' eating behavior on the basis of their own western cultural norms, thus they often regarded students as greedy and selfish. Students tend to eat tremendous quantities of meat, soda pop, juice, sweets and little else. For an Indian girl to fry herself a dozen eggs for breakfast was not uncommon. Parents' complaint that "they don't realize that meat costs money" was in fact often literally correct since, in the village, hunting might still supply much meat. Moreover, in areas which lack refrigeration, large quantities of perishable items such as eggs must be eaten immediately.

Boarding home parents also viewed another student food pattern—constant snacking—as evidence of selfishness. Students might eat at once a bag of cookies or a six pack of pop intended implicitly for the whole family to share over a period of time. Village students, moreover, tend to be accustomed to a snacking pattern of

eating rather than sitting down to three major meals. Nor are they accustomed to planning and budgeting food. Some boarding home parents locked cupboards and refrigerators to limit students' eating. From their perspective, students often complained to their own parents that they were "all the time starving" in the boarding home. Since their own parents of course shared the students' concern with food and defined food deprivation along with physical punishment as the essence of white "meanness," these complaints often led to lack of trust in the boarding home parents.

In their evaluations of boarding homes, whether food was abundant was one of the items students most frequently mentioned. Moreover, food seemed to be closely associated with the quality of the emotional relationship with the boarding home parent. As one student put it, "I like them when they're not too tight with the food." In sum, different cultural patterns of food consumption often led parents to view students as greedy and students to view parents as stingy, not only in material things but also in affection.

In spite of the potential for misinterpreting each other's behavior, a large number of boarding home parents did succeed in developing positive emotional relationships with their students. Two parent behaviors seemed critical in creating such reciprocal affection. The first was direct expression of unconditional warmth. These parents were not especially concerned about whether the students liked them and responded to them immediately with a spontaneous demonstrative warmth that prevented the student from misinterperting their feelings. Much of this affection was expressed through the powerful nonverbal communication channels to which Indian and Eskimo students appear to be especially sensitive, for example, bodily contact and facial expression. As one student said, "She has a smile that will make anyone feel wanted and happy." Often, these parents directly expressed love for the student verbally as well. As one said matter-of-factly, "When we sat down together that first night, I told him I loved him and I cared about him." When asked how she could tell someone she had just met that she loved him, the boarding home mother laughed, "It's very easy. You just come out and say, 'I love you.' You say it with feeling in your voice. It's a feeling from the heart." More sophisticated parents might be

embarrassed by such open demonstrativeness, but believed that direct expression of warmth was critical to the relationship. As one boarding home father explained.

> You feel sort of silly telling a 15-year-old girl that you love her. But you've got to do it because they are that direct with each other. She writes letters to her brother that you'd think were written to her boyfriend. Also, they don't have the history of relationships that you have with your own children. They don't know how you feel about them unless you tell them directly.

In addition to being exceedingly direct, the warmth of these successful parents was at first not conditional upon the student's actions. These parents did not wait to observe an adequate sample of the student's behavior before they made a decision concerning how they felt about him. While parental warmth might be withdrawn on occasions of misbehavior later in the relationship and, indeed, then comprised a powerful means of influencing student behavior, by that time the base had been established. Direct expression of parental warmth helped to convince the student at once that the white parents did like him and helped to prevent the student from interpreting unfamiliar aspects of the parents' behavior as prejudice and rejection.

Secondly, while themselves expressing great warmth, these parents tended to be little concerned about whether the student returned their affection. Indeed, these parents assumed reciprocated warmth in the absence of the direct signs of affection that they themselves showed. Such security about reciprocated affection was important because Eskimo and Indian adolescents and adults tend to be highly ambivalent both about expressing affection and being the object of affection (Briggs, 1970; Helm, 1961). Although village parents treat small babies with extreme warmth and indulgence, overt displays of affection are not normative between parents and older children. The arrival of a new baby typically results in swift dethronement and deprivation of overt affection for the older child. Indeed, the lack of overt affectional display between parents and older children is recognized as a sign of the child's maturity. Proud of his new status, the child may overtly reiect display of parental affection although covertly he longs for it.[2]

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[2]For a detailed example of these processes among Eskimos see Briggs, 1970.

This repressed desire for affection, combined with resistance to its open display, often led boarding home students to intensely desire but ambivalently react toward the boarding home parents' display of warmth. Thus, a student who strongly desired affection might respond to a boarding home parent's hug not with a returned embrace or even an acceptant relaxation, but with bodily tension. These successful parents, however, did not feel rejected and withdrawn. Rather, they tended to laugh about the student's unresponsiveness. "He lets me hug him with one arm," said one boarding home mother, "but not with two. I guess that's reserved for his own mama." These parents were often unaware of emotional undertones that in fact did indicate the student's ambivalence toward them, and, when aware of negative feelings, they often dismissed them as "teenage ups and downs." Especially in the later phases of the relationship, when students may withdraw because they feel that their new love for the boarding home parent indicates disloyalty to their own parents, these parents' lack of intense concern with reciprocated warmth helped to maintain a positive affectional relationship. In short, these successful parents were thick-skinned. They were not obsessively concerned with the students' feelings toward them and did not interpret the students' behavior as rejection, even when rejection might have been intended.

Parents who developed a relationship of mutual affection with the boarding home student communicated warmth in other characteristic ways. Typically, food was plentiful. Also, the family frequently had a high activity level so that negative emotions did not become contained and stabilized. As one student pointed out:

> When you get out of the home and go on trips and things, you have different feelings. Everybody is excited and the relationship becomes closer. You begin to feel that the boarding home parent is really human. If the kid is left in the same environment, the same patterns continue.

Humor was also characteristic of these parents, and they frequently laughed about problems that other boarding home parents became anxious about. In sum, these successful parents demonstrated in easily understandable ways the affection that was highly rewarding to the student and did not demand that the student reward them in return by overt displays of affection.

Status Structure

While parents who succeeded in developing mutually satisfying relationships with boarding home students evidenced little conscious awareness of the affectional dimension of the relationship, they tended to be extremely concerned about the status dimension, the student's feelings about whether he received the respect and trust congruent with his position. This emphasis harmonized with that of the boarding home students, who also tended to be unanalytic about affectional interactions but very much aware of status messages. Intense concern with status is, of course, typical of the adolescent stage of development where a person aspires to adulthood, but is not treated as such. Preoccupation with status is also generally characteristic of minority group members who seek to validate insecure positions by obtaining status acknowledgments from members of the dominant group.

For the Indian or Eskimo boarding home student, status concerns are acute not only because he is an adolescent and a minority group member, but also because he experiences a severe objective status loss in the transition from his village to city roles. In the village, the adolescent at puberty is viewed as a young adult and the later adolescent, as a mature adult (Olsen, 1970; Gubser, 1965). By these criteria, all boarding home students would fall into the adult category, and about half or more would be considered mature adults (see Table 3). The prerogative of adulthood in the village, as in western society, is fundamentally freedom from parental control. Only little children have rules (Chance, 1966). Only little children are told to go to bed or to come in to dinner. Adolescents, who are adults, regulate their own behavior. They stay up all night if they are having fun and they get something to eat when they are hungry.

In western society, the role of the adolescent is much closer to the role of child than adult and consequently entails much legitimate parental regulation of behavior. Thus, as a matter of course, boarding home parents set rules for students, such as coming in for meals at regular times or going to bed early on school nights. Students, however, often perceived these rules as major denials of status since only small children may be treated this way in the village.

TABLE 3

AGE AND GRADE DISTRIBUTION OF STUDENTS IN REGIONAL SCHOOLS AND BOARDING HOME PROGRAM*

September 1970

Number of Students in Each Grade		Percentage of Students in Each Grade	Number of Students in Each Age Level		Percentage of Students in Each Age Level
Primary	69	5.2	Under 14	60	4.5
9th	504	38.6	14	95	7.2
10th	311	23.8	15	233	17.7
11th	220	16.8	16	304	23.1
12th	192	14.7	17	247	18.7
Spec. Ed.	7	.5	18	171	13.0
			19	103	7.8
			20	57	4.3
			21	29	2.2
			22	16	1.2
	1303	99.6		1315	99.7

*These statistics include the students enrolled in regional schools at Beltz and Kodiak as well as Boarding Home Program students. Figures were collected by Bridget March of the Division of Regional Schools and Boarding Home Program.

Moreover, for a number of reasons, boarding home parents tended to intensify students' status loss by treating them as even younger than the western adolescent role would justify. First, boarding home students often display physical characteristics that to western adults are cues of childhood. Eskimo students especially tend to be small and to have the rounded face, undefined facial features, and paucity of body hair that western adults associate with young children. Second, students are often placed in a school grade much lower than their urban age-mates. Since their fundamental role is that of "student," parents may relate to them more in terms of their academic status than chronological age. Third, village students rarely have urban experience and may have to be taught such things as how to cross the street or the meaning of a red light, lessons which parents are accustomed to teaching only very young children. Fourth, boarding home parents often find it rewarding to treat the student as a very young child because the parent enjoys the student's delight at new experiences very much the way parents enjoy the reactions of small babies as they discover the world. To obtain these rewards, parents often placed boarding home students in situations where they needed parental nurturance or reacted in interesting ways.

For these reasons, status loss based on treatment viewed or seen as appropriate for a younger life stage was one of the major costs perceived by boarding home students in the parent-student relationship. Such treatment was especially galling when boarding home students in their late teens were placed with "parents" in their early twenties. One of students' most frequent complaints was that the parents "treated me like a child." One young man, for example, who left an urban boarding home for one in a Native community where he could regain his status, commented in disgust that the mother "bought me a bicycle and tried to get me to join the Boy Scouts." Students were extremely sensitive to any status implications of parental communications. "She called me 'baby,' " one Indian girl complained of her boarding home mother, totally ignoring the affectional message in the address and responding only to the status implication.

Males especially were likely to experience severe status loss in the boarding home family because, in addition to being treated like a

child, they were often treated like a girl. Sex role divisions of labor are much stronger in the village than in urban society, especially among Eskimos. Boarding home parents often unwittingly assigned women's work to Indian and Eskimo men — washing dishes, sweeping the floors, watching a baby. Male students, bitterly resenting such chores since their male status demanded important work, often expressed passive resistance by "forgetting to do them." Unaware that their demands were actually creating high costs to students since they entailed a loss of status, boarding home parents often became infuriated at what they perceived as an unfair exchange in the relationship. As one parent complained, "After all I do for him, all I ask is that he just dry the dishes at night, and he won't even do that much for me."

Some parents, who were aware of the sex role implications for household tasks, nevertheless believed that asking young men to do women's work was justified since these were the tasks that needed to be done. They explained to the student western versus village differences in sex role division of labor. Such explanations helped ease the situation. As one student commented, "I dislike cleaning up the house every weekend. That's women's work at home, but I guess it's different in the boarding home." On an emotional level, however, male students still may feel degraded by performing women's work just as, on an emotional level, boarding home parents feel anxious when the student withdraws into silence, even though they intellectually understand Indian and Eskimo students' verbal reticence in a stress producing situation.

In addition to status reduction through treatment appropriate to a younger age level or less important sex role, students also felt that boarding home parents did not treat them as persons worthy of trust. Students viewed parents' queries concerning where the student was going, whom he would be with, and what he would be doing as evidence not of parent's interest and concern, but rather that the parents "think Natives are all alike and that I'm just going to get into trouble." New boarding home parents especially tended to act like over-anxious mothers with their first babies. Fearful that something would happen to the innocent in the city or fearful that the student was indeed wayward, these parents attempted to keep the student under total surveillance. As one student said, "She wanted me to ask every time I even went out for a walk. It's degrading."

Ironically, boarding home parents often denied status to the student not only through inappropriate demands, but also through inappropriate generosity. Among Indians and Eskimos, gift-giving entails reciprocal obligations. One gives something to another in the expectation that, when one is in need, the assistance will be returned (Nelson, 1966). Gift-giving in the village is not gratuitous; it is a balanced but delayed material exchange system. While this form of gift-giving also occurs in western culture, for example, in the exchanges of favors among politicians, another western gift-giving form is the altruistic, where a material gift is exchanged not for a material return, but for psychological rewards, such as the gratitude of the receiver. In altruistic gift-giving, the receiver's expression of gratitude becomes critical since it is the major reciprocation provided to the giver. Altruistic gift-giving is, in sum, status enhancing for the giver but status reducing for the receiver. Thus, Eskimos traditionally regarded the "free" gift followed by a "thank you" as highly degrading. Freuchen (1961) reports that when he tried to thank his Eskimo friends for sharing their meat with him, they responded, "It is your right . . . there is nobody who gives or gets gifts . . . for thereby you become dependent. With gifts you make slaves just as with whips you make dogs (p. 109)."

Boarding home parents found it difficult to resist altruistic gift-giving. Parents enjoyed what they thought would be village students' delight at new clothes, sports equipment, and records. They could play "Lord of the Manor" or "Lady Bountiful" at little cost to themselves. Moreover, many students arrived with little more than what they wore, and parents were embarrassed at sending their boarding home student to school with clothes less good than their own children's. While some gift-giving, especially at appropriate occasions such as Christmas, cemented the relationship, where this gift-giving was excessive, it aroused ambivalent feelings in the student. Fears of dependency and resentment at status loss mingled with enjoyment of the material objects. As one young man wistfully remarked, "It's nice, but there's nothing you can do for them. They do everything for you."

In order to avoid status loss by receipt of a free gift, students frequently acted as if the gift was their due and failed to display appropriate appreciative behavior. As others have pointed out,

students may not verbalize "thank you" because such expressions are not normative in Indian and Eskimo villages (Wax & Thomas, 1961; Nelson, 1967). However, status restoring mechanisms seem more important than ignorance of western social customs in explaining this behavior; students in homes where they were not placed under severe pressures to display gratitude tended to learn quickly western culture expectations concerning gratitude display. These students attempted to reward parents with "thank you's" when appropriate. Indeed, some students overdid it. As one mother remarked, "He thanked me and thanked me about ten times and I only baked him a cake."

In homes where the student was placed under strong pressures to reward the boarding home parents with gradutude, he frequently attempted to re-define the boarding home parent-student relationship as one of balanced exchange by asserting that the parent was making money by keeping him. He was a financial asset to the family and, therefore, need not feel dependent or grateful. Since boarding home parents, especially those parents who expected their rewards in the boarding home parent-student relationship to derive from the gratitude of the student, frequently spent much more than the monetary stipend on the student, this status-restoring maneuver infuriated them. Parents generally responded by attempting to prove to the student beyond any doubt that they were actually altruistic, a tactic which exacerbated the student's feeling of status loss.

The boarding home student's frequent refusal to express gratitude to the boarding home parent led to great dissatisfaction on the part of many parents because gratitude, or the satisfaction of having their — in many cases — objectively altruistic behavior recognized, was one of their major rewards in the relationship. Indeed, one of the most frequent complaints of boarding home parents was that students did not show appreciation for all that they did. Denied status by the student, such parents often recited their good deeds to the coordinator, who played an important role in performing the appreciative and status enhancing maneuvers that the student refused to do.

Status loss is almost inevitable for boarding home students in the transition from the village to the city. It occurs in the boarding

home and also in the urban school, where the best student in his village might find himself at the bottom of the class. Status loss occurs in students' most casual interactions in the urban community. Eskimo students especially may feel psychologically small just by being constantly around physically taller white people. Boarding home parents who visited students in their village were often shocked by the student's higher status. As one said, "Why he looked half a head taller when I saw him in Wainwright. There he was surrounded by his equipment with his girl friend. There he was a man."

Those boarding home parents who developed mutually satisfying relationships with students behaved in ways that reduced as much as possible students' status loss in the transition to the city. To some extent these parents restored students' status by avoiding rules which were not age-appropriate. As one parent observed, "After all, you're not going to tell a man of 18 that it's time to go to bed." However, the key to giving the students status was not fewer objective rules; rather it was in explaining these rules as adult-appropriate behavior. In the status as well as in the affectional area, these parents were very direct about their feelings. They often told the student explicitly that, although there were rules, they considered him an adult. As one boarding home parent, who had many stringent rules, put it:

> I would say that the most important thing is that instead of treating them like a child you treat them like an adult. It's a very thin line. "Okay, we have rules and regulations. You know what we expect of you, and we trust you to set a good example so we can be proud of you."

These parents also obtained desirable behavior not by making rules, but rather by telling the student what behavior was in keeping with an adult role. One parent, for example, said that she never told her girls to stay out of bars, but every once in a while she "would remind them how young ladies behave."

Again, as in the affectional area, while giving status to the student by very direct means, these successful parents did not expect the student to reward them by direct expressions of gratitude. They

perceived the student's appreciation of them in subtle ways. When asked whether the student showed gratitude, these parents usually asserted emphatically that he did and mentioned not verbalized thanks, but the student's attitude or unsolicited help around the house. Indeed, in those homes where the students were grateful, they often attempted to repay the parents by doing chores that the parents had not requested. Performing an unsolicited chore placed the student in the same status position as the parent who gave an unsolicited gift.

In sum, these successful boarding home parents helped restore the student's inevitable loss of status in coming from the village to the city by telling him very clearly and directly that they considered him an adult. Although these parents avoided rules that were inappropriate for the student's age, more importantly, they explained their rules as adult-appropriate behavior. These parents also did not demand that the student enhance their status by direct, verbalized gratitude, but perceived as rewards non-verbal signs of gratitude through which the student could reciprocate his obligations without assuming a position of subservient dependency.

Power Structure

The cause most frequently precipitating the disintegration of the boarding home parent-student relationship was dissatisfaction with the power relationship. The boarding home parent might tell the coordinator to take the student away because the parent could not control his behavior. For example, the student would not conform sufficiently to family routines to make life tolerable for the parents, or the student insisted on prowling the streets and the parents did not wish to take the responsibility for him. Such costs outweighed the rewards the parents received in the relationship, and they terminated it. For the student, a frequent cause of requesting a transfer was that the boarding home parents were "too strict" and "bossy." Students consciously evaluated their costs in a home largely in terms of the parents' attempt to control their behavior and restrict their freedom.

The power relationship tends to be a critical area in the boarding home parent-student relationship, in part because of the

vast differences between a village and city in the types of behavior that need to be regulated. In a small village, there is little need for rules governing the child's freedom of movement and of association. Everyone knows everyone else and often everyone is related to everyone else. The child will not be going long distances where he might get lost or into areas where there are dangerous cars or dangerous strangers. Knowing that the child is with familiar people in a familiar area, village parents typically do not attempt close surveillance of his movements any more than an urban parent attempts close surveillance of his child when he knows he is somewhere in the home. Nor do village parents see an objective reason why a child must be home for every meal when he can easily eat at a relative's or help himself when he is hungry. Especially in the summer, the situation from which boarding home students arrive, village life tends to be casual. It is not unusual for teenagers to celebrate the days and nights of continuous light by staying up all night at dances that begin late in the evening and end in the morning.

In addition to differences in the areas of behavior that must be regulated, Indians and Eskimos tend to hold very different attitudes toward the legitimacy of coercive authority and toward the ways in which it is appropriate to direct and sanction other people's behavior. Coercive authority is fundamental to western institutions with their extensive, formalized rule systems and explicit punishments for disobedience (Wax & Thomas, 1961). Among Indians and Eskimos, in contrast, similar institutions tend to be absent. Informal concensus, a chief system, or custom are the traditional authoritative institutions. The village council, an institution recently brought into being by whites, lacks traditional legitimacy and in some areas its rules and regulations are ignored. Boarding home students, in short, are not accustomed to obeying formalized rules, except in the school setting.

Coercion in interpersonal relationships, as well, is normative and legitimate in western society. Western parents assume such coercive authority in their relationship with their children and, indeed, American statutes and common law protect parental power over children to an extraordinary degree (Kleinfeld, 1970). Even casual encounters between equals are characterized by subtle but habitual coercion. As Wax and Thomas (1961) observe:

> Even when white people do not wish to accomplish some end, their conversational patterns are structured along coercive lines. Thus, at a casual party, the man who remarks that he plans to buy a pear tree may anticipate that someone will immediately suggest that he buy a peach tree instead. If he remarks that he is shopping for a new car, someone will be happy to tell him exactly what kind of a car he ought to buy. The same thing happens if he ventures an opinion about music or politics. Someone is bound to inform him (in a friendly way, of course) that he ought to be listening to, reading, or attending something for which he has no particular inclination.

A cardinal interpersonal premise of Indians and Eskimos, in contrast, is that one does not interfere directly with another person's behavior (Wax & Thomas, 1961; Helm, 1961; Nelson, 1966). As one boarding home student succinctly put it, "No one in Wainwright tells the other person what to do." This principle of non-coercion applies not only to relationships between two adults, but also to relationships between parents and children. Non-interference principles can be carried to lengths that shock westerners, who place little value on non-coercion in interpersonal relationships but high value on social betterment achieved by making other people do what's good for them, whether or not they are so inclined.

Helm (1961) describes an incident in an Athabascan community that is a "distillation of the norm of non-interference":

> Four-year-old Benny Heiro seemed to spend his days bombarding our cabin with rocks and sticks, despite our frowns. Cora replied, "Yes, Benny was like that at her house, too." He had spent that morning pounding on the wall with an axe and culminated his labours by striking Cora's four-year-old daughter on the head with the blunt end. (The anthropologist) exclaimed in shocked tones, "Good heavens, what did you do?" Cora replied, "Well, I told him to go home, but he wouldn't." (p. 87)

Nelson (1969) emphasizes the importance of non-interference in an Eskimo community:

> One man seldom tells another what to do. If a young hunter walks out onto the ice in summer without pushing a sled along, those who know better will probably let him shoot a seal and learn for himself how difficult it is to drag the seal home on the ice without a sled. Only in a dangerous situation will comments or hints be made, and even then they are often cryptic and indirect. Minding one's business reaches

> extremes on occasions. I once saw two puppies pull an excellent caribou skin down from a cache and rip it to shreds, in full view of several Eskimos. It is better not to interfere in another man's affairs at all than to risk offending him, even in situations like this. (p. 380)

It is important to distinguish, however, between direct interference with another person's behavior, which is condemned, and indirect interpersonal surveillance and sanctioning, which actually may be more intense in a small village (Briggs, 1970; Helm, 1961). Such methods maintain amiable surface relationships and avoid face-to-face confrontations (Kemnitzer, 1967). Thus, paradoxically, a person might perceive fewer overt rules and regulations in the village and feel more like his "own boss" because no one gives him orders, although subtly expressed norms and sanctions govern certain areas of his behavior far more stringently than in an urban area.

Given these marked differences in cultural perspectives on formal rules and coerciveness in interpersonal relationships, the power relationship between boarding home parents and students is a predictable area of conflict. Boarding home parents saw themselves as requiring that the student follow only a few self-evident rules, mere norms of urban life, yet the student perceived these rules as illegitimate displays of naked power. The boarding home parent typically attempted to regulate large areas of the student's behavior that were previously unstructured. The student must tell the parent where he is going and when he will be back. He must go to bed and eat meals at certain times. He must eat vegetables. He must not visit so much with his friends, etc.

Not only the rules themselves, but also the authoritarian style in which certain parents expressed and enforced them imposed high costs on Indian and Eskimo students unused to interpersonal coercion. These parents presented rules as ultimatums. In order to validate their authority, they arranged confrontation dramas where their authority was upheld, but at the cost of severe loss of face by the student. Reincarnating the Indian wars, these parents described the boarding home parent-student relationship as "a pitched battle." "It was either her or me, and I was going to win."

The following enforcement of authority scenario is a very extreme instance of the processes that occur. The boarding home student had received an upsetting letter from home, left the supper dishes half unwashed, and went upstairs to his room. The boarding home mother became furious and felt that his failure to do the dishes threatened her entire authority over him. If he did not do the dishes, he would never have any more respect for her. She screamed at him to "get right down here this instant and do those dishes." When the boy did not respond, she marched upstairs, flung open his door, and repeated the order. He still did not respond and she went to get a whip. At this point, the boy ran outside in hysterics, and the parent called the coordinator. The coordinator suggested that she leave the student alone for a while, but she refused, explaining that she would lose all her authority. The boarding home mother wrote the boy's parents saying that she wanted to treat him like her own child and that this was the way she would treat her own child.

Boarding home parents who had not developed a positive affectional relationship found that they had surprisingly few resources through which to influence the student's behavior. In the early stages of the boarding home parent-student relationship, especially with students who had not been around white people, the student's fear and awe of the white parents usually prevented misbehavior. Indeed, quite often the students were too fearful of the parent even to ask if they could leave the home. After this initial fear dissipated, however, those boarding home parents who failed to develop satisfying relationships with students generally relied on coercive enforcement measures, most frequently restrictions.

Parents tended to be unaware of the dramatic impact of restriction upon many boarding home students, who were unused to long, drawn-out forms of punishment. Restrictions often prevented the student from seeing his friends, who served as a central source of emotional support in the stresses of the boarding home experience. Taught that it is improper to show feelings, especially angry feelings (Briggs, 1970; Helm, 1961), students often did not display the non-verbal cues that would give parents some way to gauge the effects of their punishment. As one overtly sweet and shy Eskimo girl wrote in her diary:

> I am mad and kind of upset today. I hate this woman at the house. I really hate her! She makes me so mad I just could kick her. If only I could! She put me on a two-day restriction for just a little mistake . . . They say that the restrictions are not punishment, but they are to me.

A few boarding home parents attempted to control the student's behavior by stronger measures, such as depriving him of food or using physical punishment. Since village parents may consider these methods to be the essence of white "meanness" (Olsen, 1970), such punishments accomplished the immediate end of short-term control at the cost of branding the parent as an intrinsically bad person with whom a positive emotional relationship was inconceivable. Indeed, the boarding home parents themselves were often astonished at the effects of such punishments. As one mother puzzled, "When I slapped her, she sobbed as if she had been beaten, but it was only a light slap. She was so scared that she wouldn't even go out the following weekend, even though then it was all right."

Where boarding home parents exerted power in ways the student found intolerable, the students had little power to influence their behavior. Just as boarding home parents had few power resources through which to influence the behavior of boarding home students — because the relationship was a temporary one — the students were similarly limited. Unlike natural children, the student could not use the parents' identification with him and long-term emotional bonds as a way to obtain some reciprocal power. However, boarding home students did have one power resource that natural children do not. They could easily withdraw from the relationship. For parents who were partly motivated by the stipend received, the student's threat to leave (which some parents referred to as "blackmail") might induce them to modify their behavior. For parents who were motivated by altruistic needs or the desire to "improve" the student, the threat of withdrawal might also be an effective check since withdrawal signified failure to the parent. However, threats to leave were not highly effective power resources since the parent often found it easy to convince himself and the community that it was the student and not the parent who "couldn't make the grade." In addition, active control strategies are not congruent with Indian and Eskimo value orientations, so students

rarely exploited this source of power. More frequently, students passively resisted parental demands. For example, they refused to learn the manners the parent was trying to teach or pretended that they did not hear an order (a particularly subtle control strategy since many students do have substantial hearing loss as a result of *otitis media*, and the boarding home parent often does not know if he *can* hear).

Boarding home parents who developed mutually satisfying relationships with the students rarely made an issue of authority and thus allowed the student to feel autonomous. Indeed, when asked what rules they had for the student, they frequently shrugged, saying that they "didn't have any," although further discussion made it evident that the parents did have certain standards of behavior that the student was following. While these implicit rules might be stringent, students did not perceive parents as exercising excessive power because they expressed their authority in an indirect, not bludgeoning fashion. As one parent explained, "I don't order. I ask. I don't demand. I suggest." Or, as a student expressed it, the boarding home parent acted as "my advisor, not my boss."

In a number of these homes, parents did make fewer objective demands on the students because they did not attempt to regulate the student's behavior on minor issues.[3] As one pointed out, "Why fuss because he won't eat vegetables? I just give him a vitamin pill." These parents did not find it necessary to correct all behavior inappropriate by western norms. One parent, for example, remarked with amusement that his student "spits when she gets nervous. She can spit a mile. It's funny in such a pretty little girl."

These successful parents did not use restrictions, the boarding home parent disciplinary staple, as a primary method of control, although they might restrict the student occasionally. As one parent explained, "I was never a believer in restrictions. It's harder on the parent than it is on the child. Everyone is locked up together in the house and just gets madder." These parents had a diversity of influence techniques, which were similar, however, in their

[3] An Indian woman who runs a boarding house for Indian students in Canada put it this way, "I didn't preach to them or hurry them. In time children will pick up ordinary good manners and customs if you set a good example and don't criticize them. Within a month, there was a complete change" . . . (Westley, 1971).

indirection. They avoided above all placing the student in a situation where he would severely lose face.

Explanation was a very frequent control strategy. As a number of these parents pointed out, students often did not really understand the bases for such rules as staying off the streets at night or informing boarding home parents of where they were going. Such rules seemed to them to be arbitrary parental dictates. These boarding home parents attempted to explain the reason for the rule from the student's perspective in direct, clear language. One parent, for example, explained the prohibition against wandering around town in terms of the difference in the dangers found in the city and the village, "I told her that in the village you've got to be afraid of wild animals, but here it's wild people." Since invoking fears of the unfamiliar is a modal method of control used by village parents, this parent's explanation built upon students' sensitivity to fearful situations. These boarding home parents noted that they found it surprisingly difficult to give such explanations because they themselves had rarely thought about the bases of their ways of doing things and had taught these ways to their own children when the children were too young for sophisticated reasoning. Explanation is a control technique that avoids direct orders and loss of face since it seems as if the student makes his own decision based in part upon the additional information the parent provides. Moreover, explanation appears to be legitimized by village norms. Athabascan Indian parents interviewed most frequently suggested "talking to" the student as a means of influencing their behavior (Olsen, 1970).

These boarding home parents also influenced the student by allowing natural consequences to occur that could convince students of the need for behavior change without direct parental interference. Indeed, some parents purposively arranged situations where such instructional "natural" consequences would occur. One parent, for example, alleviated the problem of continual pre-dinner snacking by allowing his student to go ahead and gorge herself before dinner. Then he took the family out for dinner, and the student found herself too full for most of her hamburger and malt. Allowing a person to observe the consequences of his own actions is again an indirect method of correction commonly used in the villages since it avoids confrontation and public loss of face (Nelson, 1966).

These successful parents also used ostracism and joking, two other control methods that avoid face to face confrontations, to prevent misbehavior. Rather than attacking the student with evidence of misdeeds, parents might refuse to speak to him. Parents also might inform students that they had violated prohibitions by joking. In one case, a boarding home mother suspected that her student was frequenting the bars. Rather than accusing her, the boarding home mother made some jokes related to recent police raids where other boarding home students had been picked up, even though it was their first time in the bar. The point was understood.

In many cases, these boarding home parents also relied on the legitimate authority of the natural parents to influence the student's behavior. Boarding home parents who discussed problems with the student's own parents by letters or during visits and obtained the natural parents' support for their rules often found enforcement much easier. Occasionally, the natural parents would not reply to boarding home parents' letters or would not visit them because they were embarrassed at their poor English or at calling upon that "pretty, rich lady." Even if this occurred, however, boarding home parents could still rely on the legitimacy of the natural parents to enforce their rules by such comments as, "Your parents loved you enough to send you here away from them to get an education. Now sit down and study."

Where a positive emotional relationship had developed between boarding home parents and students, parents were able to influence students' behavior without authoritative measures. As one parent said simply when asked how he enforced his rules, "They do it to please you." Students did not want to jeopardize the warmth and approval they received from these parents through misbehavior, and the threat of withdrawn love was a powerful control. It was in those relationships where such affectional bonds had not developed that the parent found his influence resources so limited. The student had very little to lose by doing as he pleased.

Communication Structure

Boarding home parents often viewed a "failure to communicate" as their fundamental problem in the boarding home parent-student relationship. Communication, however, was rarely the problem in itself, but was usually a symptom of other problems. While some special communication difficulties did occur, parents often defined a generalized unhappiness with the relationship or problems related to affect, status, or power merely as communication problems. Such a definition of the situation was less threatening to the parent since it implied that there was no basic disagreement and that if everyone would understand each other everything could be resolved. In addition, Indians and Eskimos tend to respond to stress or express disagreement by withdrawing into silence. For this reason, parents frequently interpreted student's silence, their mode of response to another problem, as lack of communication and the major problem. Moreover, students soon became aware that little else created as much anxiety and exasperation in a white adult as maintaining a barrier of silence to his questions and demands. Thus, students could use silence as a method of passive aggression to retaliate against boarding home parents.

However, communication is a problem area to a certain degree in the boarding home parent-student relationship because of the vastly different communication norms of westerners and Indians and Eskimos. Making conversation is the major way in which westerners establish social contact, especially in an unfamiliar situation that provokes anxiety (Wax & Thomas, 1961). Indians and Eskimos, in contrast, tend to respond to an unfamiliar situation by quiet observation until they know what they are expected to do. Thus, nervous boarding home parents often bombarded new students with conversational sallies to which the students responded with silence. Some boarding home parents erroneously interpreted students' initial silence as surlyness, although most were aware that Indian and Eskimo students tend to be "shy" with strangers. More experienced boarding home students, who had learned the importance western adults place on social conversation, often counseled new students above all to "talk" in the boarding home.

While students' initial reserve wears off after they become comfortable in the home, a more subtle and pervasive communication

difficulty concerns differences in western and Indian and Eskimo norms concerning the appropriateness of personal conversation. Westerners tend to view personal discussions as an indicator of interest and concern for the other person. Personal conversation is also considered a sign of an important interpersonal relationship, such as between a parent and child. With their strong values of non-interference, in contrast, Indians and Eskimos often consider what westerners view as innocuous conversation to be highly personal intrusions. Thus, boarding home parents frequently peppered the students with questions about their personal life or problems to express their concern about them and willingness to help. The student, however, interpreted this interest as prying voyeurism. Moreover, students often did not consider discussions of personal problems to be appropriate in a parent-adolescent relationship. In the village, students were not accustomed to talking about personal matters with their own parents and initially did not expect to discuss such subjects with boarding home parents. Personal matters were discussed with peers or siblings if they were discussed at all (Parker, 1962; Chance, 1966). Indeed, the student's natural parents frequently found out about his problems in the boarding home not by talking to him directly, but by talking to his friends or brothers and sisters. More experienced boarding home students learned that they were expected to discuss their problems with parents in a western boarding home and that such discussions gratified parents, but this different cultural pattern took time to acquire.

Appropriate methods of seeking information also differ substantially between westerners and Indians and Eskimos. Westerners consider direct questions to be the way to find out what one wants to know. Moreover, they tend to equate such straightforwardness and directness with honesty and sincerity, important western interpersonal values. Indians and Eskimos, in contrast, tend to view direct questions as boorish and childish, betraying a lamentable lack of sophistication. Adults wait until the future or other people answer one's private speculation (Briggs, 1970). A mature person also finds out what he wants to know by careful observation, especially, of non-verbal cues, such as posture or facial expression (Wax & Thomas, 1961). Should a person desire immediate verbalized information, the proper approach is to talk around the subject, to hint that such information is wanted. Such an indirect interpersonal approach allows the other person to

refuse to answer an implied question without either party losing face. Thus, when a more traditional Indian or Eskimo adult wants to secure the opinion of another adult on an issue, he will generally not ask a direct question, but make a statement that implies a question. For example, if he wants to know whether the person thinks the plane will come in that afternoon, he might say, "Somebody says the plane will come in this afternoon," and await the other's indirect answering statement, "Maybe the weather is bad." Had he asked directly whether the person thought the plane was coming in, the likely reply would have been "I don't know."

An older Eskimo student who had formerly lived with a white family suggested that boarding home parents might find communication much easier if they adopted a more indirect style of information seeking and were more attentive to nonverbal cues. Suppose, the interviewer inquired, a student came home from school looking unhappy. Should the boarding home parent ask him directly what is wrong or should he leave the student alone? The Eskimo student replied that the parent should try to help the student, but he should not be too obvious, since the student would lose face if he admitted his problem. The parent, he suggested, should get the student to talk about his day in school and be observant and alert. Somewhere, maybe in the middle of the story, the student's voice will change or maybe he will pause. Then the parent will know what is the matter.

Inflection and sentence form patterns that differ between cultures can also cause misinterpretations. For example, Indians and Eskimos may phrase a question or request in the statement mode, but with a question inflection (Olsen, 1970). Thus, a student may say, "I am going to town," with a rising intonation. What the student has said is, "As an independent person, I am going to town unless anyone has a serious objection." The irritated boarding home parent may not be aware that permission has been indirectly requested. A difference between Athabascan Indian and western sentence patterns mentioned by village teachers is the Indian tendency to phrase a request in the imperative mode. For example, the person may say, "Take me to town," when he is actually asking, "Will you take me to town?" Such "orders" anger white people who do not understand this pattern.

While differences in cultural norms about appropriate communication styles explain much of what the boarding home parent

perceives as the student's failure to communicate, the student may also withdraw into silence because the parent is engaging him in conversation that he perceives as status reducing. It is difficult for westerners, such as boarding home parents, to realize the extent of many Eskimo and Indian students' sensitivity to possible allegations of inferiority. For example, the parent may ask the student to tell him about life in the village and the student may reply with a monosyllable because he feels that anything he said would demonstrate his inadequacy. As one student explained:

> I didn't know how to answer them really. I couldn't really answer their questions because I thought that if I told them certain things like we lived in a little run down shack compared to what they're living in, it made me feel much lower.

Students often perceived the parental questions that began, "Can you do . . . ?" Have you done . . . ?" or "Do you know . . . ?" as highly status reducing, since they might be forced to admit that they cannot do, have not done, or do not know something that they believe they should. Yet, parents were very likely to ask just these kinds of questions, since they were unsure of the students' knowledge of the urban area.

Similarly, students were often unwilling to ask boarding home parents questions when they needed information. Parents did not understand that it made students feel "ashamed" to ask how to use the telephone or the shower when they felt that they should have learned such childish things long ago. Moreover, since direct questions bothered them, they believed that their questions would bother the boarding home parent. Only the older, more sophisticated students realized that white adults found such questions highly rewarding, since they provided the opportunity for the adult to assume a nurturant role.

Students also did not talk to their boarding home parents because they believed that the parents might embarrass them by telling amusing stories to a third party. As Polacca (1962) warns in discussing Navaho etiquette:

> The Navajo will tell about himself if and when he trusts and likes you as his friend. When he does this, he feels that he is confiding in you. If you pass along this information carelessly, he will feel that you have betrayed him, that you cannot be trusted. This applies not only to his family relationships, but also to small daily happenings, which to the non-Indian seems to be small talk, carrying little weight or importance.

Indeed, in an essay giving advice to prospective boarding home students, one boy wrote as his first suggestion:

> Never really let out your problems to your boarding home parents until you know that you can trust them as friends because what you say may sometimes be very amusing as I know from experience . . . they have ways of passing information around.

Since gossip and ridicule are major methods of village social control, students were extremely sensitive to being talked about and laughed at. Yet, it was difficult for boarding home parents to resist telling others about their cute reactions to an urban environment, since enjoyment of these novel responses was an important reward to parents in the relationship.

Parents who developed mutually satisfying relationships with boarding home students rarely viewed communication as a problem. In part, the lack of difficulty in this area resulted from the mildness of problems in other areas; thus, the student did not withdraw into silence. However, these parents also seemed to make fewer demands for conversation, especially formal discussions. As one put it, "When there's something to talk about, she'll talk about it." They also appeared to rely more on non-verbal channels to obtain information about the student, often referring to his posture, expression, or actions rather than to his verbal comments as the way in which they knew how he was reacting. In many cases, also, the parents' preferred conversation style was closer to the student's norms of indirection than to western norms of straightforwardness. Lacing conversation with humor, these parents also lessened the tensions in conversational exchanges.

These successful parents often reported that they engaged in many discussions with the students, and such conversations were obviously important sources of student learning. As one boarding home father said,

> I just say to them, "What is it you want to know? I'll give it to you straight." We discussed mercy killing and everything. Sometimes the girls say something like, "Think I'll go shack up," and that blows my wife's mind. They're just doing it to test us, because they're looking for standards.

In sum, some communication difficulties occurred in the boarding home parent-student relationship because differences in cultural communication norms, student's sensitivity to status reducing messages, and student's fear of parental gossip made conversation too costly for the student to engage in. According to students' reports, slightly less than half of them talked to their boarding home parents often or sometimes about their problems (see Table 4). Parents who developed successful relationships with students, in contrast, often engaged in much conversation because they reduced students' costs in communication through their sensitivity to the status implication of messages and through an indirect communication style closer to students' norms.

TABLE 4

FREQUENCY OF BOARDING HOME PARENT-STUDENT DISCUSSION OF PROBLEMS IN ANCHORAGE AND FAIRBANKS: 1970-71

Frequency of Discussing Problems with Parents	Number	Percentage
Very Often	30	11.4
Sometimes	91	34.6
Not Often	113	43.0
Never	29	11.0
TOTAL	263	100.0

This information was obtained from students' reapplication forms and consequently does not include opinions of graduating seniors.

Summary

The interpersonal relationship between the boarding home parent and student disintegrates when either or both find that the costs of the relationship exceed the rewards. Those few parents who expect material rewards from the relationship, such as a financial profit or help with housework, are usually disappointed and withdraw as soon as the

student's unfamiliar behavior imposes small costs. The majority of parents, however, expect primarily emotional rewards, such as affection, validation of their self-image as a generous and civic minded person, gratitude, interesting confidences and reactions from a culturally different person, or the satisfaction of shaping the student's development. Where a positive relationship develops, boarding home parents are likely to receive such rewards and find the relationship very satisfying. Such rewards outweigh the costs of the student's sometimes troublesome behavior as he adapts to urban community and family life. Where a positive relationship fails to develop, the parent not only does not receive these rewards, but also pays additional costs in endurance of the student's silence and animosity, excessive household disruption, worry about the student's whereabouts, and, above all, the sense that the parent has failed. The experience of failing as a boarding home parent can severely threaten the self-esteem of a white adult. Years later, parents who have dropped out of the program speak of the experience with great emotion and confess that they still worry about what they did wrong.

From the student's perspective, the costs of the boarding home parent-student relationship are high. For many students, the material rewards available in the relationship, such as the opportunity to live a "comfortable" western life style, are not of great value since they may prefer familiar food, surroundings, and people. The student must pay heavy costs in leaving the emotional support of the primary group and living with white strangers from whom he expects prejudice and rejection, in enduring the dramatic loss of status in the transition from his village to city role, and in giving up much of his freedom and accustomed ways of doing things. Boarding home parents who develop satisfying relationships with students reduce these costs by accepting the student with demonstrative warmth, explicitly treating him as an adult, influencing his behavior in an indirect style that preserves the student's sense of autonomy, and refraining from demanding overtly reciprocated affection and gratitude. Moreover, these parents express their warmth and view of the student as an autonomous, trustworthy adult in extremely direct ways that a person from a different cultural background can easily understand. Warmth and approval from a member of the dominant culture are highly rewarding to students, especially in a period of emotional deprivation and general status threat. Such rewards can far outweigh the costs of altering their behavior in the ways that the parent requests.

CHAPTER III

A TYPOLOGY OF BOARDING HOME PARENTS

This section suggests a typology of boarding home parents that defines classes of parents who are likely to develop satisfying, versus unsatisfying, relationships with students. It also suggests strategies for matching different types of students with different types of parents within the potentially successful parent class in order to increase the probability of mutual satisfaction.

Matching different types of boarding home parents with different types of students can take advantage of the tremendous diversity of parents and students. While the shy Native child who has never before seen the city is the popular stereotype of the boarding home student, students differ substantially in prior degree of western experience, interests and goals, age, etc. Boarding home families similarly differ substantially in the types of demands that they make upon students and in the resources they offer. It is not unusual for a family to develop a highly satisfactory relationship with one type of student, but not with another type. For example, one boarding home family emphasized achievement, activity, and integration into western culture and was willing to devote a substantial amount of time and effort in assisting the student attain such goals. One of the two Eskimo girls placed in this home had spent most of her childhood in Anchorage, shared the goals of the family, and thrived both in school and in the home. The other girl, who lived in the same village, but who had a traditional orientation, spent most of her time

with Native families in the city and refused to be interested in the self-improvement activities with which the parents attempted to entice her. She was dismissed by the parents as a "village woman" who was not getting anything out of the boarding home experience, and the parents were relieved when she transferred to a Native boarding home family.

Many different factors, of course, must be considered in placing individual students — the particular preference of the parent and student, the reactions of different family members, the student's emotional balance, the proximity of close friends, etc. This typology attempts to suggest general dimensions that may be useful in the broad, initial classification of parents and students.

Motivational and Demographic Variables

Although boarding home parents could be classified in many different ways, popular opinion about the program classifies them primarily by their motives for taking a student. Parents who take students for material rewards such as money or household work are considered undesirable parents, while parents who take the students for altruistic reasons, such as a desire to help them, are considered desirable. The results of this exploratory work suggest that motivational criteria are not very useful in distinguishing desirable from undesirable parents, except perhaps in extreme cases, because parents with similar motives often related to the student in very different ways. Some parents who took the student primarily for the money, for example, indeed proved to be highly unsatisfactory parents who rationed food and were unwilling to adapt any of their behavior to the student's needs. Yet, other parents who took the student primarily for the money developed very good relationships. These parents felt that the students were helping them out so they should help the students out. Moreover, receiving their rewards partly in money, these parents did not expect their rewards to come primarily from the student's gratitude or acculturative change.

Similarly, some parents who took the student for altruistic reasons developed satisfying relationships, while others developed very poor relationships. Some of these parents viewed themselves as

secular missionaries and placed great pressure upon the student to transform himself into their image of the model Native student. These also tended to be the parents who expected payment in gratitude rather than money. Experienced boarding home program staff in Alaska and elsewhere (see Little, 1970) are aware of the dangers of the "save the Native" syndrome, although the general community does not recognize this problem. Motivation, in short, may be a clue to the way the family will behave toward the student, but it is only one clue. Rather than focusing on the motives that are believed to give some insight into the behavior of the parent, it is more useful to classify parents by their behavior itself.

At the beginning of the project, it was thought that demographic variables, such as the social class and ethnic group of the boarding home parents, might be related to their success. A substantial research literature does suggest that middle class child-rearing methods result in higher achievement and better mental health (reviewed in Hess, 1970). In addition, it seemed likely that Native students would be more comfortable with urban Native families, especially relatives. This exploratory project, however, provided no basis for entertaining such hypotheses, a conclusion reached also by an analysis of another similar boarding home program (Little, 1970). While some middle class families proved to be successful boarding home parents, others placed excessive achievement pressures on students. In addition, with their distaste for sentimentality, some of these middle class families had great difficulty in expressing warmth in the direct and straightforward way that students immediately understood. Similarly, while some students were happy with relatives or with urban Native families, others were not. Relatives might take a student because they did not want to refuse the parents, even if they did not have the room or the inclination. In addition, relatives might demand a great deal of baby sitting and other household chores from the student as kinship obligations, and the student became disatisfied when he compared his situation to that of his friends.

Behavioral Variables

The characteristics of boarding home parents that appeared to be most strongly related to the development of mutually satisfying

relationships with students was their behavior in the affective and power dimensions of the relationship. The most critical aspect of boarding home parents' behavior seemed to be the *ability to communicate warmth.* Other research has found parental warmth to be a central dimension of parental behavior, one that is related with remarkable consistency to the achievement, mental health, and conscience development of natural children (Arkoff, 1968, pp. 350-352; Morrow & Wilson, 1961; Aronfreed, 1968, pp. 302-323). Rogers (1961) suggests that this emotional quality is the core of any type of helping relationship and the most significant factor in determining whether the relationship leads to the development and maturity of another individual.

In a cross-cultural relationship, a special problem regarding warmth occurs. The person must not only express warmth, but also must express it in a style that persons of a different cultural background can understand. Although persons from a similar cultural background may be able to receive subtle messages of warmth, persons from different cultural backgrounds may receive only broad messages. For this reason, this dimension of boarding home parents' behavior has been labeled not simply warmth, but rather "communicated warmth."

The second dimension of boarding home parents' behavior that seems central in explaining the development of mutual satisfaction is the *perceived demandingness* of the parent. This dimension is similar to the parental control factor, labeled "permissiveness-restrictiveness" or "democratic-authoritarian," that is usually found in analyses of child-rearing methods (Arkoff, 1968, pp. 356-363). This dimension is labeled "demandingness," rather than control, to emphasize that, in a cross-cultural relationship, boarding home parents are concerned not so much with controlling the impulses of the child as demanding conformity to different cultural notions concerning what is appropriate behavior. This dimension is labeled "perceived" demandingness, rather than merely demandingness, to stress that the way the parent expresses these demands is as important if not more important than the objective level of the demands in themselves. A student may perceive one parent who commands and orders as highly demanding, although he perceives

another parent who requests or suggests precisely the same behavior as demanding very little.

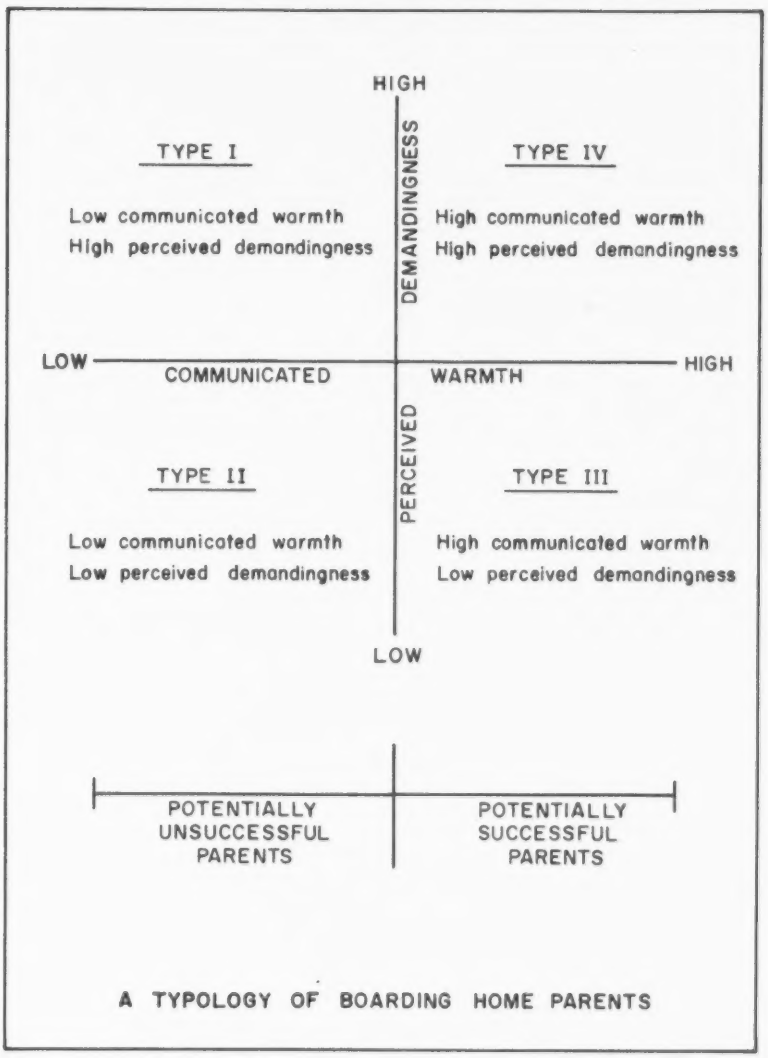
These two parental dimensions suggest a typology of boarding home parents where each parent is ranked on both his degree of communicated warmth and of perceived demandingness (see Figure 2.) Thus, a family characterized by high communicated warmth and high perceived demandingness would be placed in the upper right quadrant, while a family characterized by low communicated warmth and high perceived demandingness would be placed in the upper left quadrant. Each family could be placed at different points within each quadrant, of course, to correspond to its particular degree of warmth and demandingness.

The warmth dimension indicates a central reward that the student may receive from the boarding home parent-student relationship, while the demandingness dimension indicates a central cost. Boarding home parents who are low in warmth (Types I and II) are likely to develop unsatisfactory relationships with students because they offer few rewards. Especially unsatisfactory is the Type I, low warmth - high demandingness parent who not only offers few rewards but also imposes great costs. Boarding home parents high in warmth (Types III and IV) are the potentially successful parents. However, the most successful parents are not necessarily those who impose the fewest demands (extreme Type IV) because imposing few demands may create other costs for the student, such as a feeling of guilt from lack of accomplishment or improper behavior. A moderate level of demandingness together with high warmth appear to be optimal for success.

Type I Boarding Home Parents: Low Communicated Warmth — High Perceived Demandingness

Boarding home parents in this group tended to be quite unhappy with their relationship with the student. While in many cases sensitive, generous parents who had excellent relationships with their own children, these parents had great difficulty in developing a cross-cultural relationship. They found it hard to express the open,

FIGURE 2
A TYPOLOGY OF BOARDING HOME PARENTS



demonstrative warmth to which Indian and Eskimo students respond. These parents also tended to have high expectations for the boarding home student, desiring to socialize him into middle class values (which the parents honestly regarded as a way of life leading to greater happiness for the student) or desiring him to show high school achievement that would enable him to become a leader and help his people. Such demands could shred the self-esteem of a student who had neither the desire nor capabilities to fulfill the parents' goals.

One group of parents in this class tended to have a classic authoritarian personality pattern (Adorno, 1950). They tended to be extremely concerned about the issue of their authority over the student and covertly enjoyed wielding power. They usually held rigid middle class or religious values — punctuality, cleanliness, church attendance, family togetherness — and admitted no cultural relativism. Disapproval of teenage sexuality tended to be an undercurrent in their thinking as well. These parents in many cases were prejudiced against Natives, but the prejudice was covert. It was often masked by protestations of positive regard for Natives who belonged to the parents' in-group, such as their church. Indeed, the excessiveness of these protestations of positive feeling toward Natives was one good way to identify such parents.

Another group of parents in this class tended to be the intellectuals. Their lack of warmth was not so much judgmental coldness, as in the authoritarian group, as it was a sophisticated reserve and embarrassment about sentimentality. Typically, they desired the student to show great interest in school work and were willing to devote much time, effort, and money to helping the student academically. Many of these people were enthusiastic boarding home parents when the program began, but withdrew in later years because the experience was so unsatisfying.

The following case studies of boarding home parents in this class concern only the authoritarian personality group. Extensive interviews were not held with parents in the other group as most had dropped out of the program. Moreover, the authoritarian personality parent is the most important to eliminate from the program since

boarding home students placed in their homes were subjected to pervasive disapproval that could severely undermine their self-esteem. In addition, students in their homes tended to rebel passively by refusing to adopt even the appropriate behavior that the parents struggled to implant. Rebellion of this sort could lead to serious difficulties in an urban environment.

It is important to point out that the regular boarding home coordinators did not select the families described below for the program. They were included in the program by emergency assistants employed during a coordinator illness.

Case I:[1] Mrs. E. is an older woman with iron-gray hair who ushered the interviewer into an immaculate, carefully decorated house that looked like a page from *Better Homes and Gardens.* During the interview, Mrs. E. glanced nervously at the interviewer's coat, which had been put down on the couch and visibly relaxed when she was able to hang it up in the closet. Mrs. E. had been boarding home mother to a 17-year-old Indian girl who had left her moderately traditional village for the first time. Mrs. E. reported that she had put up with this spoiled, undisciplined girl for two months, but had finally gotten rid of her. She said that she was glad to offer the student advantages, but it had destroyed her house. Her own daughter developed a nervous tic in her eye, and she had ended up with a perpetually knotted stomach.

Her daughter, an only child, had been very eager to have a boarding home student for company, and they had spent a great deal of time during the preceeding summer making a room attractive for her. They had redone the bedroom and a private bath. None of these things were actually necessary, Mrs. E. added, and they were expensive, but they wanted to show the student that she was welcome. However, the girl had been oblivious to all they had done. All she wanted to do was spend all her time in a broken down trailer across town with a Native family. Indeed, the girl had no appreciation for any of the advantages Mrs. E. offered. "At first,"

[1] Identifying characteristics have been changed in these case studies so that families can not be recognized. In a few instances characteristics of several families have been combined into one composite portrait.

said Mrs. E. wistfully, "I was all eager to change her. I wanted her to get her teeth straightened and her hair fixed up. She could have been a very attractive girl. I kept fussing at her that whole first week."

When asked what problems she had had with the student, Mrs. E. launched into her recital with gusto. First, they could not communicate. The student would never listen to her when she was talking. Mrs. E. thought the girl hard of hearing, but then she realized that the girl did hear what she wanted to hear. For example, when the telephone rang, she jumped for it, and her friends were always calling, especially during dinner. The student also told lies to other people. She said that Mrs. E. made her clean her room from top to bottom every day, when all she had to do was pick up her clothes and make her bed. "Of course," added Mrs. E., "her ideas of cleaning and mine were rather different." Mrs. E. arranged a number of dramatic housecleaning scenes. On one occasion, with the waiting school bus providing dramatic tension and the girl's friends serving as an intent audience, Mrs. E. went to her room and said (imitating a sugary tone of voice), "Did you get your room picked up?" "Yes," replied the student. At this point Mrs. E. spied a pair of socks on the floor, pointed a threatening finger, and ordered the girl to pick them up. The girl hesitated, glared at Mrs. E., and finally submitted. Saving as much face as possible by snatching up the socks and throwing them wildly into the closet, she ran from the room.

A more sensational drama occurred over the girl's social life. Mrs. E. forbade the girl to date since she was "seventeen, but immature" and forbade her to go to the movie theater in the part of town where the bad (read Native) element hung around. Once she went to pick up the girl at a theater, even though she hated to drive at night, but the girl had gone. "I was there on the dot," explained Mrs. E., "but I couldn't find her. I thought the worst. I thought she had gone to the bad theater and went after her, but she wasn't there, either. Then I went home and accused her, but she said she had walked home. She said that she did wait, and I wasn't there. But I knew that wasn't true because I am always on time. I bawled her out and she ran to her room and cried and cried. What she really needed was a hickory stick."

Mrs. E. had met the student's mother when she came to town for medical treatment and said that she was even "more childish" than her daughter. "I told her everything her daughter had done and she just sat there and smiled. All she would say was 'Yes' and 'I don't know.' " Mrs. E. was especially irritated because the mother had taken some cast-off clothes given to the girl back to the village and neither of them had expressed any appreciation.

Mrs. E. said that she had bought the girl new clothes and a radio. But the girl did not act pleased and did not even thank her. When the student left, Mrs. E. told her that she could take these things with her because they were hers. The girl left them. Mrs. E. concluded that the girl's basic problem was that she hated all white people.

After Mrs. E. had expressed her views, the interviewer attempted to explain some of the cultural bases of the student's behavior in order to explore the effects an orientation program might have with parents of this type. Mrs. E. was interested, but said that the information would make no difference in her behavior since "the village is the village and the city is the city."

Case II: Mr. L. is a quiet, very kindly man and Mrs. L. is a large, big-bosomed woman resembling a steamship. They had been boarding home parents to an Eskimo boy who had never been out of a traditional village.

Mr. and Mrs. L. reported that they had had many problems with the boy. When he first arrived, he immediately wanted to go away. He always wanted to be with his friends or Native families. If he were home, he was either on the telephone or hiding in his room. He constantly received phone calls from girls, Mrs. L. observed with distaste, and "any Native was a girl friend."

Mr. and Mrs. L. tried and tried to talk to him and make him feel like a member of the family. They asked him about his hobbies and what he did in the village, but all he would say was that he rode a Honda.

Mrs. L. said that the real problem started when his mother came into town. She gave him a check for $109 which he had earned the previous summer. "That money was his independence," asserted Mr. L. "Then he didn't have to come home for supper anymore because he could buy it at Safeway. Before, he would come home because if he didn't, he wouldn't get any supper." "I felt as if I were running a motel," added Mrs. L., "You can't run a family like that." Mrs. L. attempted to hold the money for the boy to prevent his squandering it. "All right, I want that money," she said (imitating a stern countenance and a nasty tone of voice). "I got the money but I don't think he trusted me with it. He didn't want to put it in the bank, though."

According to Mrs. L., church was another major problem. Every Sunday morning the parents insisted that the boy go to some church, but he refused to go. "You can't raise a good Christian family with bad influences around for your own kids," she explained.

Mr. L. thought it was a shame he could not get along with the boy because he liked Natives. Many belonged to his church, and they were good people. He thought the boy's mother was "nice," adding that he was surprised she was sober when he met her.

Mr. and Mrs. L. had tried their best to make things nice for the boy. Mr. L., for example, had taken the boy moose hunting. However, the boy tried to pretend that he did not care and refused to give Mr. L. the satisfaction of showing any enjoyment. Once, Mr. L. said, they did catch sight of a moose and the boy forgot and became excited in spite of himself.

Again the interviewer's attempt to explain the bases of the boy's behavior did not suggest that an orientation program would be promising for parents of this type. Indeed, these parents seemed to want to use the information to make things harder on the student as they now had a better idea of what things mattered to him. "If it's so important for them to be with friends and relatives," concluded Mr. L., "then we should put them in a school thirty miles out of town so they could be kept in bounds."

Type II Boarding Home Parents: Low Communicated Warmth – Low Perceived Demandingness

This type of parent corresponds to the popular stereotype of the "bad" boarding home parent who has taken the student for the money, does not care about him, and lets him run wild. This exploratory project, however, did not find any parents who could be put into this category. There were parents who did not develop warm relationships with the students, but these parents also tended to place strong demands upon them (Type I parents). Since, the students in these homes often rebelled against parental directives, they possibly gave the impression that the parents allowed them to run wild.

Clearly, Type II boarding home parents would not be desirable. That no parents of this class were found may be attributable to the sensitivity of Boarding Home Program coordinators to this type of parent, whom they excluded from the program during initial interviews.

Type III Boarding Home Parents: High Communicated Warmth – Low Perceived Demandingness

The families in this category were all Natives who retained a largely village life-style while living in the city. Since they shared the cultural background of the student, they tended to express warmth in ways the students understood. Interestingly, these parents found it unnecessary to communicate warmth in the demonstrative way necessary for white parents, from whom students expected rejection and whose behavior was likely to be misinterpreted. Since they themselves did not hold strong middle-class values and had adapted their village life-style to the city, they placed few demands on the student.

While all the families in this category were Native, it is important to note that all Native families were not in this category. Indeed, many upwardly mobile Native families placed as severe demands upon the students as were made in any family studied.

In the Type III families, the students were often able to speak their own language, eat food from home, and discuss village affairs. The home atmosphere was usually one of casual disorder. Since a constant stream of neighbors and friends from the village flowed through the home, students were less likely to feel isolated and lonely. Parents' and students' values and behavioral expectations tended to be congruent. For example, these parents found it very natural that the student should want to spend all his time with his peers and not with them. Nor did they expect the student to discuss personal problems with them. Nor did they demand to know where the student was at every moment, although they sometimes professed that they did.

The primary weakness of these Type III boarding home parents, which the parents themselves recognized, was they lacked methods of controlling those students who were overly enticed by urban excitements. Like village parents, these Native boarding home parents were not accustomed to interfering with an adolescent's behavior. In addition, precisely because the student was so comfortable with them, he was more likely to do as he pleased. These parents could not use the student's awe and fear of them to control behavior as could white parents. Moreover, those students who could not control their own behavior felt ambivalent about living with these families. While they enjoyed the freedom, they felt guilt at not doing what they felt they should.

Type III boarding home parents may be successful for certain types of students. As one of these parents suggested, this type of home may provide a desirable transition for those students who have never been out of traditional villages and who indicate no propensity for behavior that could get them into trouble. These homes also may be desirable for those students who are men of 20 or older and consider partying to be a prerogative of adulthood. Students in this type of home who have western goals, however, will not receive the guidance and other benefits (those that could help them acquire the skills needed to attain their aspirations) that they might receive in more western homes, whether Native or non-Native.

Case III: Mrs. C. is an Eskimo woman married to a white man. The family lives in a section of town known as "Eskimo Village,"

where many Eskimo families live in inexpensive homes and maintain a largely village life style. The Eskimo student who transferred to her home is the same boy who had previously lived with Mr. and Mrs. L., the Type I parents previously described. Much of the problem behavior that the boy displayed in the former home — refusing to communicate, go to church, or help with the housework — changed dramatically in Mrs. C.'s home.

The interviewer arrived to find that Mrs. C., barefoot in a housecoat, had totally forgotten the appointment. Nonetheless, Mrs. C. welcomed the interviewer heartily. Since there was no place to sit down in the living room, piled with clothes, toys, and assorted junk, Mrs. C. led the interviewer into the kitchen, which was filled with an impressive accumulation of dirty dishes. Throughout the interview, Mrs. C's relatives called on the telephone, and at one point several visitors from Mrs. C's home village arrived.

Mrs. C. mentioned that she was from the same town as the student's mother and that she and the student spent a lot of time making tapes to send home. They spoke Eskimo together quite often, although her husband got mad because he did not know what they were saying. She also helped the student with English. "He forgets and puts an Eskimo word in an English sentence," Mrs. C. explained. "I used to do that, too. And sometimes you're so afraid to make a mistake you don't say anything." Occasionally, they ate Eskimo food, but usually they ate whatever was around. "I say to all my kids," said Mrs. C. cheerily, "if you don't see it, don't ask for it, 'cause we don't got it."

Mrs. C. said that she had no problems with the student, that he minded her well. She was very critical of the former boarding home parents, Mr. and Mrs. L., because they were too strict. She thought it was ridiculous to restrict the student just because he refused to go to church. "I wake him Sunday mornings and he goes to church with me," she said, "but I don't push it on him. He'll go as long as he isn't pushed. Why he likes to go to church because there you can meet people." Mrs. C. was also shocked that Mrs. L. had physically shaken the boy for not doing housework. Mrs. C. emphasized that the boy was very good about doing housework for her. She just told them all

(imitating a cheerful, matter-of-fact tone), "O.K. you guys, it's time to do the KP." Mrs. C. added that the student sometimes cleaned up the living room for her even when she said nothing about it.

Mrs. C. said that a lot of things about the boy's behavior bothered her husband but not her. For example, her husband got mad when the boy came home after 5:00 p.m. for dinner, but she realized he was out looking for a job. Also, her husband thought it was foolish to let the student go to a spook show that let out at 2:00 in the morning with his friends. Mrs. C. thought her husband's view illogical. He had done his work and he should have some fun. "Just take a cab home," she told him breezily. However, he and his friends spent all their money on popcorn and things, and he called her up at 2:00 in the morning to come and get them. She did not mind because she just loved to drive. Her husband thought she was crazy.

A few weeks later, Mrs. C. decided to separate from her husband so the student had to transfer to a different home.

Case IV: Mrs. S. is an Eskimo married to another Eskimo whom she met at boarding school. They left the village reluctantly so that her husband could get a better paying job. His job takes him back home frequently, however, so they keep up on village news and have fish, muktuk, and oil in the house. Mrs. S. is boarding home mother to two Eskimo girls. One had just transferred to her home.

When the interviewer arrived in the late evening, Mrs. S. and one student were just sitting down to a casual meal. Mrs. S. thought that the other student was at her cousin's, although she was unsure. She expected the cousin to send the girl home in a taxi.

Mrs. S. said that the student was not happy in the first home because she felt uncomfortable all the time. The parents spoke sharply to her, and she thought they disliked her. They did not eat Eskimo food, and, anyway, she was too scared to eat anything (the former boarding home parents had said that the girl ate fine). "What

the kids like to eat," explained Mrs. S., "is frozen raw fish and meat." When she has none from home, she buys a frozen white fish or frozen reindeer steak, which some supermarkets carry, and they all eat it raw dipped in oil, once it defrosts enough to get a knife through it.

Mrs. S. also mentioned that the first home restricted the girl too much. The mother wanted her to stay home with the family. Mrs. S. explained that Eskimos are not used to being restricted in one area and get claustrophic. "In the village," she emphasized, "you are always out visiting and seeing what's happening. You never stay home to have fun." Mrs. S. thought that it was very important for the Boarding Home Program to have something in town for the students everyday so that students could get together and talk.

Mrs. S. considered it of the greatest importance to have fun with your friends. She was carefully planning a slumber party for all the boarding home students from her village. She agreed with her students that it was not good to have parties with white kids because then the Eskimo kids were uncomfortable and "couldn't concentrate on having fun."

Mrs. S. said that there were no rules for the students, although she wanted to know where they were and when they were coming back. She could not understand why some boarding home parents had strict bed times because students are "old enough to get to sleep whenever they want to." Mrs. S. also did not require many chores, just picking up and doing the vacuuming. If they forgot, she just told them, "I do my share and you do your share." She thought it was ridiculous for boarding home parents to get mad about chores. "No one in the village," she remarked, "would get upset just because a kid forgets to wash a pot."

Both of these boarding home students came from a village where the village community and the peer group held negative feelings toward Fairbanks, and they dropped out later in the year.

Type IV Boarding Home Parents: High Communicated Warmth – Moderate to High Perceived Demandingness

The parents in this group were much more diverse in background and personality than the parents in the other classes. The parents were similar, however, in relating to the students with open demonstrativeness and great warmth. When discussing the problems that they had with the students, these parents often laughed about them, mentioned that they themselves had acted the same way as teenagers, and blamed themselves as much as they blamed the students.

These boarding home parents varied both in the type and amount of demands that they placed on the students. In some homes, achievement was emphasized, while in others parents were more concerned that students conform to middle class notions of good manners. In some homes, students had a great deal of freedom, while in others the objective demands made on the students were as stringent as any made in the Type I homes. However, students in Type IV homes perceived a lower level of demandingness because the parents expressed their demands in ways that prevented the students from losing their sense of autonomy.

These homes tended to be casual, informal, and active. Parents and students often talked a great deal, and much informal teaching and counseling occurred. These parents often spoke about how much they enjoyed having the student with them because he was "a lot of fun." Students also spoke of these homes positively. As one said, "I like everything, absolutely everything. As a matter of fact, I love the H. family like I do my parents."

Clearly, the most successful boarding home parents lie predominantly in this class. Within this group, students can be matched with parents whose demands are congruent with the student's capabilities and desires. For example, those parents who highly value academic achievement and are willing to devote much effort to helping the student could be matched with students who are also interested in educational goals. Such matching strategies

might lead to relationships that maximize mutual satisfaction and student growth. The diversity of these parents makes them difficult to identify. However, an interviewing boarding home coordinator can make a reasonably good assessment of the warmth of prospective boarding home parents by observing how the parents relate to the coordinator and to his own children. These parents' casual warmth tends to overflow into any interpersonal relationship. The coordinator could obtain some notion of the types of demands the parents would make upon the students and the way in which they would express these demands by presenting typical problem situations that occur with students in boarding homes and ask the parent how they would handle them.

Case V: Mrs. R. is a plump, relaxed woman who is an experienced boarding home parent. This year she took care of three Eskimo girls. Mrs. R. took the interviewer through a living room casually strewn with sewing materials and anthropology books (for a course which she was taking at the university, having become interested in Eskimo culture) into the kitchen. The interview was conducted informally while Mrs. R. washed dishes.

Mrs. R. emphasized how much self-confidence in the urban environment the girls had developed over the past two years. When they first came into her home, she explained, they were very quiet, but now they are outgoing. Last year she would drop one of the girls off at the library, and she would be too scared to walk in. Now the girl jumps out of the car and says, "If it's got a card catalogue, I'll be all set." Another student who used to shrivel up when the subject was even mentioned is learning to drive. "The girls just take over in the house now," added Mrs. R., "If I'm late, they are the ones who start dinner."

While pointing out the ways that the students had changed, Mrs. R. was also interested in the ways they retained basically Eskimo values. "The girls take music lessons," she explained, "and two of them are very good, but the other one has no ear. However, they try to maintain the appearance of equality so they won't make her feel bad. They'll practice the same page over and over (until I could die), but they won't go ahead to the next page until she's ready, too."

Mrs. R. emphasized that she also had changed a great deal as a boarding home parent. "In the beginning I was too strict. I was scared about the whole thing and I over-reacted. When they didn't come home from school right away, I'd worry. Now I know that a friend from the village has probably come in and they're all together. Last year I'd constantly ask them where they were going and they'd just say, 'I don't know.' That was a sign that they didn't trust me. I don't get over-anxious any more, and we get along fine."

Counseling the students took a lot of Mrs. R.'s time. "They get upset about their boy friends or their parents. I just try to keep them calling home or writing home so they don't worry." Last year, Mrs. R. added, she spent a lot of time talking with them about the reasons people live differently in the city and in the village. "It's funny," she observed, "Usually, you yourself don't know why you do things the way you do. Once I was trying to explain to them why they should do their homework after school and not in the middle of the night. Then they asked me why I always went to bed early to get to the office at 8:00 in the morning, even when there was nothing special to do in the office and something very interesting to do the night before. You know, I really began to wonder about why I did things like that."

Mrs. R. said that she had few problems with the student, and, when she did, she tried to avoid restrictions because everyone just gets bad feelings. If the kids misbehaved, sometimes she ignored them or left the house. "That's what they do to me when they're angry," Mrs. R. pointed out. "Some problems," Mrs. R. noted, "were as much my fault as theirs. For example, they had to get used to a culture dependent on time. After a week of waiting dinner and getting mad about it, we went ahead and ate. After they missed dinner a few times and had to make their own, they weren't late again."

When asked about rules, Mrs. R. said she had none. "However," she added, "I do have certain expectations." For example, she expected the girls to go to church, and they went most of the time. "But we let them make their own decisions," Mrs. R. said. "We wake them up on Sundays and then they decide. Sometimes they say that

they don't want to go. They're just trying to assert their independence. I was the same at their age." Mrs. R. said that she asked the girls to do very little around the house because she felt that the housework was her job and studying was the girls' job. "Last year I assigned chores," Mrs. R. explained. "When I did that, someone always had to be on the spot supervising and reprimanding. Now I just ask everyone to carry their load and share. There are no specific assignments. We just work together. If the girls forget, my three-year-old will say, 'Ladies, it's time to set the table.' They like that because they think it's cute and then I don't have to order them to do it."

Mrs. R. emphasized how important it was to use an indirect approach when approaching a sensitive subject with Eskimo students. "You joke about it or hint and eventually you get around to the point you want," she explained. "For example, the kids gained an average of twenty pounds of weight because of the plentiful food around here. I wanted to make them aware of their weight problem without embarrassing them so I made fun of myself for being overweight. Then they got more relaxed about it. Finally, I said, 'O.K. troops, this is it, I'm going on a diet.' They couldn't give up the goodies, though. Then they saw that I lost 10 pounds, and they wanted to do it, too. We all went to the supermarket and pushed baskets full of grapefruit. They were pleased as punch when they went from a size 13 to a size 10."

Mrs. R. said that she had met the father of one of the girls, and he seemed like a "responsible, loving father." However, she admitted that she just did not get around to corresponding with their parents as much as she felt she should.

Two of the girls had rated this home as "very good" and the third as "all right." All were planning to return the following year.

Case VI: Mrs. H. lives in military housing on base as her husband is an Army sergeant. They were boarding home parents to an Indian boy who had never before left a moderately traditional village. Mrs. H. welcomed the interviewer cheerily and pressed her hand warmly while apologizing for the messiness of her house.

Mrs. H. said that she had to have a lot of rules in her home because the regulations on base were very strict. "He has to observe the curfew, no walking around after 11:00," she explained, "because, if he were caught, my husband could lose a stripe and that means a loss in salary. The first night he stayed out too late with his friends, who also live on base, and we went to get him. We explained the rules and regulations to him, which he didn't know and couldn't be expected to know. We said to him, 'We love you and we are concerned about you and we care for you. You don't want father to lose a stripe.' You have to let him know that your reputation and honor is in their hands. Give them a responsibility. They don't want to embarrass you any way."

Drinking and smoking, Mrs. H. added, were taboo in her household. Two boys living with another family on base got into trouble with drinking, but she did not stop her student from associating with them. "You've got to let them know you trust them," Mrs. H. said. "You can't accuse them and point the finger at them. They're not going to do half the things they would do otherwise. Prove that you really love them by trusting them."

Mrs. H. said that she asked the student to do few chores because there were few chores to do. She did ask him to take out the garbage every day. When he forgot, she didn't say anything to embarrass him. She just docked him $.25 from his $5.00 a week allowance (double the payment provided by the Boarding Home Program). "He didn't forget the next time," she chuckled.

Mrs. H. was very critical of other boarding home families who told the students that they were short on food and was not dismayed by her student's preferences. "Here we have meat and potatoes every day, all he wants. My husband doesn't like salads either so we don't have much of that. My husband also brought home moose and he liked that a lot. At first he thought it was beef, and he was going to wrinkle up his nose."

The boarding home family and natural parents had a great deal of contact. "His parents came in twice, once on a visit and once for a funeral. We asked them questions about what they wanted us to do.

For example, we asked if we could take him to our church because they have some activities there for teenagers. His father said, 'Of course.' You know, his mother embraced me when she left and told me how glad she was her son was here, and I was overwhelmed, I couldn't help shedding some tears. We write often. Now whenever he balks, I tease him, 'O.K. young man, this is orders from your parents. Let's go.' "

When asked whether the student expressed gratitude, Mrs. H. said emphatically, "Oh yes! He doesn't come right out and say anything, but when it's a Sunday and we're not home from church, he washes the dishes without being asked."

The student rated this home as "very good" and was planning to return the following year.

CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY: RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ALASKAN RURAL SECONDARY EDUCATION

Improved Boarding Home Parent Selection and Parent - Student Matching

This paper has suggested methods of boarding home parent selection and parent-student matching that may increase mutual satisfaction and growth. To summarize these suggestions:

1. Boarding home parents who cannot communicate warmth to students (Types I & II) should be screened out of the program. The program seems to have successfully avoided Type II parents, who make few demands and allow students to run wild. However, authoritarian Type I parents, who demand immediate conformity to middle class norms are equally dangerous since their judgmental coldness may lower students' sense of worth and students' rebellion in these homes may cause them to get into serious trouble.

2. Boarding home parents who live a village life style in the city (Type III) should be used with caution. These homes may provide a desirable transition for new students from traditional villages. They may also offer a home to students who are adult men by western as well as Indian and Eskimo cultural definitions and who cannot adapt to the norms of a

western home. However, these parents often cannot effectively influence the behavior of those students enticed by city excitements. Nor can they offer the urban guidance and informal learning experiences available in more western urban homes, whether Native or non-Native.

3. Boarding home parents who communicate warmth in an open, demonstrative way and who make only necessary demands upon students in a style that allows them to preserve their sense of autonomy (Type IV) should be selected as much as possible. Within this class, parents and students should be matched on many individual criteria. An especially important matching criterion is the congruency of the parents' and students' goals. Parents who are achievement oriented may provide especially useful help to achievement oriented students.

Boarding home coordinators can identify many potentially successful and unsuccessful parents by attentiveness in initial interviews to parental warmth, ways of responding to problem situations, and attitudes toward Natives. The authoritarian Type I parent, whom it is most critical to eliminate, is generally easy to spot because of the rigidity of his values and his obvious prejudice or indiscriminately positive attitudes toward Natives. Type I parents of the secular missionary style are also easily recognizable because of their stress on achievement values and goals. The casual village life style of Type III parents is easily apparent. The successful Type IV parents are most difficult to identify since their backgrounds are so varied. However, attentiveness to the warmth these parents display in their relationships with the interviewing coordinator, as well as with other family members, might be one valuable clue.

Obtaining better boarding home parents seems more likely to be attained through improved selection methods than through extensive parent orientation programs, although orientation programs might be of some value. Fundamental personality dimensions, such as degree of interpersonal warmth, however, are unlikely to be much influenced by a short training program. Moreover, orientation programs may actually have undesirable effects with certain types of parents, such as authoritarian ones, by giving them information about students'

sensitivities that they can use to students' detriment. Orientation programs, which are used only sporadically at present, might be valuable, however, in providing information to new boarding home parents of the Type IV class because the programs would enable them to avoid common misunderstandings and relax more about the relationship. A number of experienced, highly successful boarding home parents mentioned that they had to learn how to be good boarding home parents. Their experience might be useful to others.

Redefinition of Boarding Home Parents' Role to Restore Legitimate Authority of Natural Parents

A pervasive problem of the boarding home parent-student relationship, even in successful cases, is the ambiguity of the role of the boarding home parent. The parent is told to "treat the student like his own child," but this is at once not enough and too much direction. It is not enough direction because it does not guard against parental abuses. The parent who takes a razor strap to the student asserts, probably with honesty, that he is "treating the student as I would my own." It is also not enough direction because it does not sensitize parents to the particular needs of rural students. As one parent pointed out, "You can't treat them like your own child because you don't have the same history of interaction with them. Your own children know you love them, but with these kids, you have to be much more direct about showing your love."

At the same time, the philosophy of treating the boarding home student like a natural child is too much direction, because it leaves no important role for the natural parents. Usurping the parental role undermines the self-respect of the natural parents and indirectly undermines the self-respect of the student, who identifies with them. As one student pointed out resentfully, "My boarding home parent forgot that I had a family and did not consider the wishes of my parents when they should have." Older and more sophisticated students may become disturbed at what they consider the "fraud" and "pretense" of the boarding home parent-student relationship where the boarding home parents attempt to be their real parents. "They are not really my parents," one said scornfully, "They are always pretending." The philosophy of treating the boarding home student like a natural child is also too much because, in the case of

most urban boarding home families who are whites, such a relationship undermines the student's cultural identity. Such treatment will not contribute to the student's pride in an aspect of his identity that is intrinsically a part of him.

Boarding home parents should not be expected to assume the role of a foster parent, a role which implies that the child is in their home because the natural parents are in some way inadequate. They should be advised to treat rural students not like their own children but as the students' parents would like to have them treated. Such a Boarding Home Program philosophy could encourage parents to learn more about students' background and communicate more with the natural parents. This philosophy would help also to restore the natural parents' status and authority. Those boarding home parents who have established such a relationship with the natural parents are often surprised to see how much they are in fundamental agreement. As one natural parent expressed it:

> We know how to raise our kids here in the village. We know that they get to run around and do what they want, but we don't worry because we know where they are and who they are with. We know all the people and kids here. But we don't know about the city. We've never lived there like you white men. When our kids go to the boarding home, we want those parents to show our kids how to live in the city like white people do. The parents in town got to be tough on them and make them mind or they'll get into trouble. I don't want them to be mean to my kids but to show them how to stay out of trouble. You white men have lived in towns a lot, you're the ones that know how to get along in the city. We can't tell you what to do, you're the ones who are supposed to know that. (Olsen, 1970)

When the student realizes that his own parents and the boarding home parents are in agreement, the boarding home parent-student relationship often becomes much more relaxed. The student does not feel torn between the two and their differing values and life-styles. The student has a better opportunity to maintain his cultural identity while learning the specific western skills necessary to occupational success.

A Rural Secondary School Option System to Meet the Different Needs of Different Types of Rural Students

While improvements in parent selection methods and a change in the role assumed by the boarding home parent may increase the success of the Boarding Home Program, a fundamental problem lies not with the program, but with the lack of secondary school alternatives presently available in Alaska. Some types of students thrive with a boarding home family in an urban environment, but others do not. These other students may do better in a dormitory or cottage, where they have the security of their peer group, or in a secondary school program in a Native area, where the transition is not as severe. Secondary school options are needed so that students can select the educational environment most appropriate to their needs. Were such options available, the number of students that enter an urban boarding home program would be sharply reduced, and Boarding Home Program staff would be far more selective about the families who participate.[1] Many of the unsatisfactory families presently in the program are known to the coordinators, who would eliminate them if they had other secondary school placement options for students.

The Department of Education should reconsider the present emphasis on regional planning, in which all rural students in a region attend whatever type of secondary school facility is planned for the region. Providing options to students within a region, such as a dormitory and high school in a predominantly Native area and an urban boarding home program, may much more successfully promote the growth of different types of rural students. Since the dormitory facilities presently planned are expected to require a supplementary urban Boarding Home Program, *this rural secondary school option system* may be quite feasible and require only administrative provision.

[1] It is difficult to estimate the number of boarding home families that are presently satisfactory. About 60% of the 1970-71 boarding home students (excluding graduating seniors) in the Anchorage and Fairbanks area rated their boarding home positively. (see Table 5) However, this figure is not the same as a rating of satisfactory individual homes since several students may be placed in one home. Also, it does not include the opinions of those students who dropped out during the year or who transferred from initially unsatisfactory homes. Dr. Robert Krauss, a psychiatrist working with the Anchorage Area Boarding Home Program, estimated that about 70% of the present families are satisfactory.

TABLE 5

STUDENT OPINION OF BOARDING HOMES IN ANCHORAGE AND FAIRBANKS: SPRING 1970-71

Rating of Boarding Home	Number	Percentage
Very Good	114	39.9
Fairly Good	48	16.8
All Right	80	28.0
Not Good	42	14.7
Very Bad	2	.7
TOTAL	286	100.0

This information was obtained from students' reapplication forms and consequently does not include opinions of graduating seniors.

APPENDIX I

TEST SCORES OF URBAN BOARDING HOME PROGRAM STUDENTS

TABLE I-1

GAINS ON STANFORD ACHIEVEMENT TESTS
of Anchorage Boarding Home Students
NINTH AND TENTH GRADE, January – May, 1971

		READING		ARITHMETIC			LANGUAGE				
		Word Meaning	Paragraph Meaning	Computation	Concepts	Application	Spelling	Word Study	SOCIAL STUDIES	SCIENCE	TOTAL
Rural Transition Center N = 26											
	Pre	4.2	4.6	5.2	4.4	4.2	5.9	4.3	4.7	4.3	4.6
	Post	4.5	5.0	6.0	5.3	5.0	7.2	5.6	5.2	4.7	5.4
	Gain	.3	.4	.8	.9	.8	1.3	1.3	.5	.4	.8
West High School N = 11											
	Pre	6.9	6.9	6.2	6.4	6.2	8.3	7.0	6.4	6.8	6.8
	Post	8.1	8.2	6.9	6.8	6.7	9.4	8.1	7.0	8.3	7.7
	Gain	1.2	1.3	.7	.4	.5	1.1	1.1	.6	1.5	.9
East High School N = 21											
	Pre	5.6	6.1	6.8	5.8	6.6	7.0	6.2	5.6	5.3	6.2
	Post	7.4	7.2	7.7	7.1	6.9	9.1	7.7	7.9	7.9	7.6
	Gain	1.8	1.1	.9	1.3	.4	2.1	1.5	2.3	2.6	1.4
Average Total Gain:		1.0	.8	.8	.9	.6	1.6	1.3	1.2	1.4	1.0

From: Test results were collected by Mr. Jim Coats, Director of Psychological Services, Anchorage Borough School District, in a testing program directed by Mr. Jon Peterson, Director, Rural Transition Center.

NOTE: Students tested were in the Rural Transition Center or in the CORE orientation program at East and West High Schools. Since East and West teachers transferred students who seemed to be doing especially well to regular classes, these figures may underestimate second semester Boarding Home Program Student gains. However, these figures also do not take into account those students who dropped out of the program during the first and second semester.

*These figures refer to grade level. For example "4.0" means 4th grade level.

TABLE I-2

GAINS IN WECHSLER ADULT INTELLIGENCE TEST SCORES
OF NINTH AND TENTH GRADE ANCHORAGE BOARDING HOME STUDENTS
1970-1972

VERBAL TESTS*	Pre-Test Score	Post-Test Score	Point Gain
Information	4.4	5.1	.7
Comprehension	4.5	5.2	.7
Arithmetic	5.4	6.4	1.0
Similarities	5.4	7.3	1.0
Digit Span	7.3	7.3	0
Vocabulary	2.8	4.2	1.4
PERFORMANCE TESTS			
Digit Symbol	9.6	9.6	0
Picture Completion	9.0	9.0	0
Block Design	9.2	10.8	1.6
Picture Arrangement	8.4	8.5	.1
Object Assembly	9.6	10.4	.8
VERBAL SCORE	72.5	79.4	7.1
PERFORMANCE SCORE	93.5	98.6	5.1
FULL SCALE SCORE	80.8	87.7	6.9

Test results were collected by Mr. Jim Coats, Director of Psychological Services, Anchorage Borough School District, in a testing program directed by Mr. Jon Peterson, Director, Rural Transition Center.

*The verbal score is derived from the verbal tests, the performance score, from the performance tests, and the full scale score from both. The average intelligence test score is 100 points.

TABLE I-3

FAIRBANKS BOARDING HOME PROGRAM
NINTH GRADE STUDENTS' FINAL GRADES
May 1971

SUBJECT	GRADE	A	B	C	D	F
Earth Science		1	9	6	4	
Typing		1	10	10	5	
General Math		6	8	15	9	1
Physical Education		2	14	16	2	2
Power Mechanics				3		2
English			5	14	17	5
Art			2	2		
Home Economics			2	7	2	
Spanish				2	2	
French				3	1	1
Algebra		3				
General Crafts			1		3	2
Arctic Biology				2	6	5
Woodworking			1	1	1	
General Business				1	1	
Mechanical Drawing			2	4		
Urban Geography				2	1	
Music (Chorus)		6				
TOTAL		13	60	88	54	18

From Irene Cleworth; *Final Report of School Counselor to the Students on the Boarding Home Program 1970-71*, unpublished paper, 1971.

TABLE I-4

FAIRBANKS BOARDING HOME PROGRAM
TENTH – TWELFTH GRADE STUDENTS' GRADES FOR THIRD QUARTER

SUBJECT	GRADE	A	B	C	D	F	Inc.
ART							
Basic Art				3			
Ceramics				2			
BUSINESS							
Typing, Bookkeeping, Office Education, Shorthand, etc.		4	7	11	3	4	1
ENGLISH							
English I, II, III, IV			4	1	4		1
Composition		1	8	9	8	4	1
Speech				7	4	3	
Literature			1				
Other		3	11	2		1	
FOREIGN LANGUAGE			4	3	3	2	
HOME ECONOMICS				1	1	3	
INDUSTRIAL ARTS		2	12	6	3	2	1
MATHEMATICS		2	1	4	4	2	1
MUSIC			1				
PHYSICAL EDUCATION		3	11	2	7	4	1
SCIENCE		2	2	17	12	3	1
SOCIAL STUDIES			16	48	14	6	
VOCATIONAL SUBJECTS		1	4	2	1	3	
MISCELLANEOUS		1	4	2	1	3	
TOTAL		18	87	124	67	37	7

From Irene Cleworth, *Final Report of School Counselor to the Students on the Boarding Home Program 1970-71*, unpublished paper, 1971.

FIGURE I-1

GRADE DISTRIBUTION OF FAIRBANKS BOARDING HOME PROGRAM STUDENTS, 1971

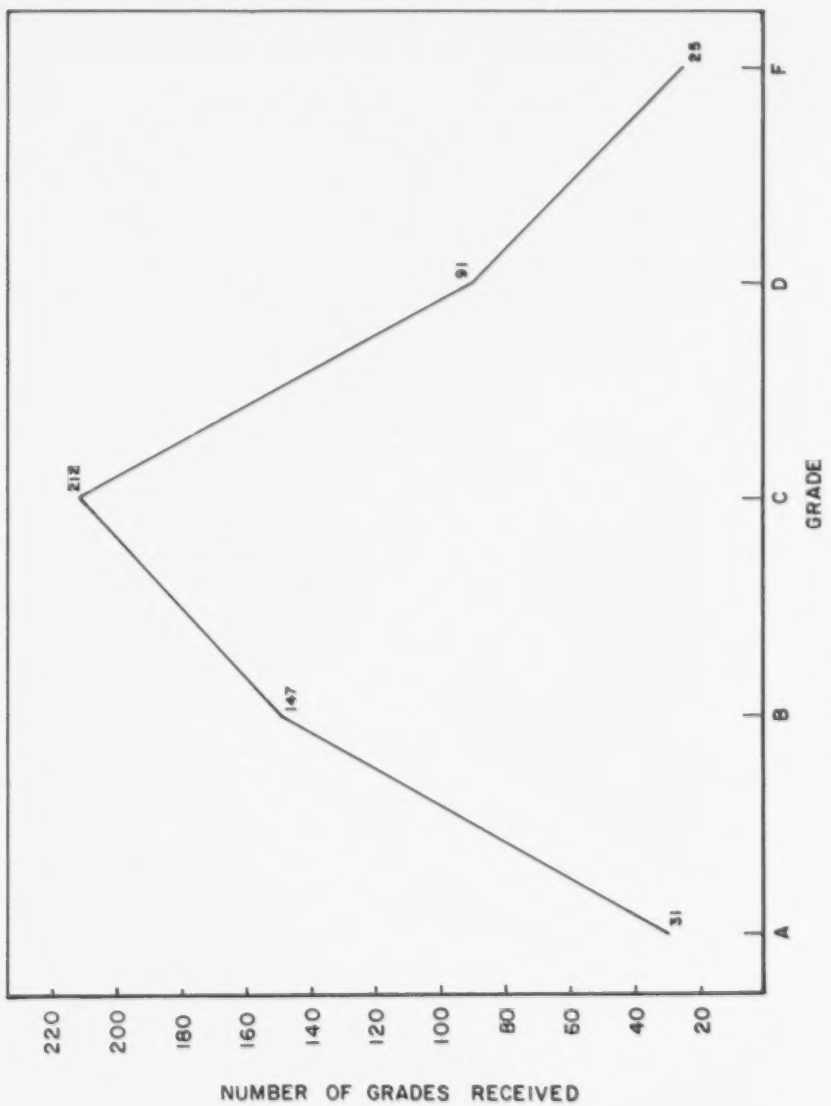


FIGURE I-2

GROWTH IN SCORES OF ANCHORAGE BOARDING HOME PROGRAM STUDENTS ON THE VINELAND SOCIAL MATURITY TEST*

September – May, 1971

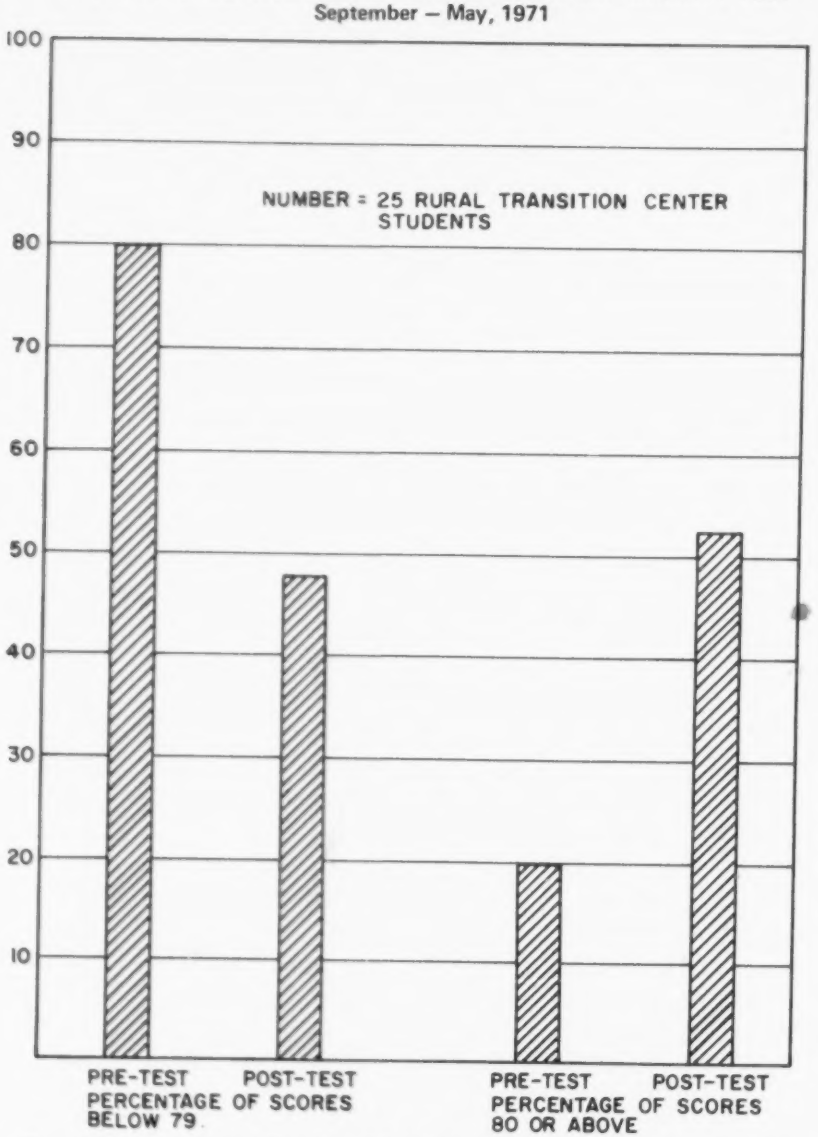


Chart by Mr. Jim Coats, Director of Psychological Services, Anchorage Borough School District, in a testing program directed by Mr. Jon Peterson, Director, Rural Transition Center.

*The Vineland Social Maturity Test is scored similarly to an intelligence test with the average score equal to 100.

APPENDIX II

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this project was to explore the characteristics of "successful," as opposed to "unsuccessful," boarding home parents. This task raised a difficult question: How should success be defined? Especially in a cross-cultural educational situation, the definition of success may depend upon the values of the observer. Should acculturative change, for example, be considered a mark of success or should it not? The evaluational perspective that we decided to use, therefore, was not that of an outside observer, but rather that of the rural student and the boarding home parent. A relationship was considered successful when both the boarding home student and the boarding home parent evaluated it positively and wanted it to continue.

However, using this criterion of mutual satisfaction as an index of a successful relationship had one important drawback. According to some popular stereotypes, students might be placed with parents who had taken them for the money and then allowed them to run wild and get into trouble. Since the student might enjoy such freedom, he might evaluate the relationship positively and the parent might also be satisfied since he received payment without work. For this reason, a second criterion of success was added — that the student had not gotten into serious trouble (such as excessive drinking, promiscuity, police contacts) while at the boarding home.

Selection of Parent Groups

Given such criteria of success, how could the sample of successful and unsuccessful boarding home parents be chosen? While one obvious possibility was to ask parents and students to evaluate the relationship through a questionnaire or interview, this method did not seem suitable. Native students, especially Eskimos, are reluctant to criticise their boarding home parents directly. In addition, such parent and student opinions should probably be solicited later in the year after a relationship had been established. However, by that time, many unsuccessful parents would have already been eliminated because the student had transferred or dropped-out.

For these reasons, the primary method used to obtain a sample of unsuccessful parents was to examine the boarding home parents when a student dropped out or transferred. Although students might transfer or drop out for many other reasons, one frequent cause was unsuccessful boarding home parents. If the boarding home student were satisfied in a different boarding home, the new boarding home parents were classed as successful. A larger group of successful parents was obtained by selecting those parents whom students had rated as "very good" on their reapplication forms at the end of the year. When a student dropped out or rated his parents highly, however, the cause could be an exceptionally difficult or an exceptionally adaptive student. The transfer situation was most useful to identify successful and unsuccessful boarding homes because it provided a very rough, but heuristically valuable, approximation to the ideal of a controlled experiment, where the responses of the same student to different types of boarding home parents could be compared.

Collection of Information

Since the Fairbanks Boarding Home Program is reasonably similar to programs in the other urban areas that enroll a majority of boarding home students, and since the researchers could observe more intensely in their home community, Fairbanks was selected as the primary study site. A few parents and students in Anchorage were also interviewed to increase the generality of results. The researchers attempted to interview as soon as possible the boarding home parents from whose

home a student had transferred or dropped out. The new boarding home parents and the student were interviewed about a month later to allow time for a new relationship to develop. A total of 30 boarding home families and 28 students were interviewed. Interviews were conducted during the first three months of the program as the bulk of the transfers and drop-outs occur during this initial period.

The semi-structured parent and student interviews concerned such topics as each party's explanation of the reason for the transfer or drop-out, the problems that occurred in the boarding home, parental rules and chores, problems that the student had in the school and community, and the relationship between the boarding home parent and the natural parent (see Appendix III). Efforts were made to obtain precise, detailed descriptions of the interactions that occurred between the boarding home parent and the student. Many parents became so involved in the interview that they not only repeated words, but also dramatized voice tone, gestures, and facial expression in describing critical incidents with their students. These spontaneous dramas provided valuable clues in explaining subtle characteristics of the relationship. The parent who talked to a student in a harsh, self-righteous tone of voice while shaking a threatening finger was apt to evoke a different reaction than the parent who made a similar point in quiet, chuckling tones. Most parents were eager to discuss students' problems as they were often puzzled and troubled by the students' reactions.

Interviewing the students, in contrast, was extremely difficult because of the silent withdrawal that is the characteristic defense and passive resistance tactic of Indians and Eskimos to an anxiety producing situation (Wax & Thomas, 1961; Briggs, 1970). No matter how much we attempted to convince the student that he would remain anonymous and that the purpose of the interview was only to attempt to find out how to improve the Boarding Home Program, some students responded to interview questions with nothing more than the classic pattern of tense silence broken with a mumbled "don't know" or monosyllable. More surprising, students often asserted that former boarding home parents were "nice," even when they had asked for a transfer because they were unhappy in the home. Only gradually did it become apparent that students' protestations that boarding home parents were nice resulted only in part from factors such as fear of

reprisal from powerful white persons or from Eskimo norms of not speaking badly of others. Students asserted parents were nice in part because they intensely desired to be liked by white people. Students saw parents' being nice to them as a sign that the parents liked and approved of them. Thus, admitting that parents were not nice was to them an admission of personal failure.

This withdrawal into silent impassivity and refusal to criticize the parent was characteristic primarily of the Indian and Eskimo students who had never before left more traditional villages. More experienced Boarding Home Program students had learned the norms governing the formal interview situation and had little difficulty in expressing their opinions. Indeed, their sophisticated response to the interview was one index of the competence these students had gained in coping with western cultural forms. The opinions of these older students mirrored to a surprising degree the opinions of the boarding home parents with whom they had developed positive relationships. The prevalence of such imitational learning underscores the potential of Boarding Home Program experience and emphasizes the importance of selecting desirable boarding home parents.

In order to improve rapport with boarding home students, the project employed four Native college students as interviewers. While much more successful than the white adult interviewers, the Native college students also found it difficult to talk to the more reticent students. Videotapes of interviews between Native college students and boarding home program students suggested some of the ways in which a western communication style conflicted with that of Indians and Eskimos and destroyed rapport. For example, the videotapes indicated that the Native college students avoided looking directly at the student when personal topics were mentioned and that they defined as personal many topics that the white adult interviewers had not realized were sensitive. By imitating the Native interviewers' behavior, white adult interviewers were able to improve their ability to establish rapport with Native students.

Not until the end of the project, however, did we begin to have some notion of what traditional Indian and Eskimo students considered an appropriate style of communication and of the extent to which the formal interview violated these norms. For example, a

standard interview question was, "Were you happy at the boarding home parents' home where you were staying before?" This question violates a plethora of students' interactional norms. First, it is a blunt and, therefore, boorish question. According to Indian and Eskimo communication norms, the proper approach would be a hint that certain information might be desired (Wax & Thomas, 1961; Parker, 1962). Such an indirect approach is considered sophisticated, a mature method of inquiry; any fool could ask a direct obvious question. Second, the question is childish and hence insulting because it asks the obvious (Briggs, 1970). It should be evident to any human being with a modicum of intelligence that the student would not have asked for a transfer had he been happy. Third, it is a question that may lower the students' self-esteem because an affirmative answer may imply to a sensitive student that, since people are expected to be happy, it is he who has failed. Although we tried to change interview questions as we became aware of these problems, our own very different western interactional norms constantly led to blunders of which we were often unaware.

During the course of the project, we realized that students would discuss personal matters, such as problems they had with their boarding home parents, indirectly through writing when they would not speak about them directly to another person. Several Eskimo students, for example, chose to inform their boarding home parents that they were unhappy in their homes by writing them a letter.[1] After detailing their complaints, the student casually left the note where the parent would be sure to find it, such as on the television set. Indeed, one student adopted the ingenious tactic of crumpling up his letter and placing it in the wastebasket with the parents' names prominantly visible just before the trash was to be emptied. Other students would write out their reasons for wanting a transfer or speak them into a taperecorder when they would not tell the coordinator directly what the problem had been. Complaints about parents were also written in diaries in English classes.

[1]See Briggs (1970) for a description of Eskimos' use of a letter to convey unpleasant information by avoiding face-to-face interaction. One Eskimo boarding home mother also used with success written notes to inform her students of unpleasant duties like chores.

These written messages became a valuable source of information concerning students' feelings about the home. In order to obtain more complete information through the indirect, written method that many students seemed to prefer, the re-application forms for the Boarding Home Program were revised to ask each student to rate his boarding home and to describe what he liked and what he did not like about the home.

In addition to the interviews and this reapplication information, participant observer methods were used. Problems were discussed with many boarding home parents informally at orientation, program meetings, and special events. Extensive discussions were also held with coordinators and the school counselor on the characteristics of different parents and the reasons for the drop-out and transfer of particular students.

In addition, students' natural parents were interviewed, although limited funding prevented extensive interviewing in remote villages. Parents in Minto, Allakaket, and Huslia were interviewed in order to obtain some idea of Athabascan parent-adolescent interaction patterns and natural parents' recommendations about the program. Athabascan villages were selected because little information was available about Athabascan interpersonal norms in contrast to the abundance of information about Eskimos (e.g. Briggs, 1970; Parker, 1962; Chance, 1966).

Our problems in developing research methods appropriate to Indian and Eskimo students have been described in some detail because these issues frequently confront others. Our experience suggests that the questionnaire, usually considered inferior to the interview in obtaining rich information about many topics, may be useful for traditional Indians and Eskimos as it avoids direct face-to-face contacts. Where the level of written skills makes the questionnaire unsuitable, use of a tape recorder, where the person can speak his thoughts without direct confrontation with a demanding white person, might be an alternative.

APPENDIX III

BOARDING HOME PROGRAM PARENT AND STUDENT INTERVIEW FORMS

BOARDING HOME PROGRAM PARENT INTERVIEW

I. Information which should be available from records

a. Members of household
b. Prior participation in BHP
c. Type of individual wanted as student
d. Sleeping arrangements
e. Family interests and hobbies

II. Introductory questions — Family Background

1. How long have you lived in this community? Have you had a chance to see any of the rural areas (does parent have knowledge of Native culture)?

2. How did you hear about BHP? How did you decide to take a student? (Attempt to find out motivation — economic, civic duty, interest, mixed.)

III. Parents' Explanation of Transfer or Termination

1. Why did student decide to leave?
2. Did you have any advance warning that student was dissatisfied?

IV. Problems in Boarding Home — Parental Demands for Normative Behavior and Response to Deviations

1. What problems did student have in the family situation?
2. How did he affect any other children?
3. Were there initial adjustment problems?

4. What rules did you have for student? What help around the house did you ask of him?
5. Did he break the rules frequently? How did you handle the situation?

V. Problems in School and Community

1. What problems did student have in school?
2. How much homework did he do on the average?
3. Did he participate in any extracurricular activities?
4. Did he have any teachers or subjects that were his favorites or that he intensely disliked?
5. Did student have any problems in community (pick-up by soldiers, contacts with police)?

VI. Parents' Analysis of Peer and Relative Influences

1. Did student have many friends in this community? Were they BHP students or others? Did his friends influence his decision to transfer or terminate?
2. Did student have relatives in the community? Did they influence his decision to transfer or terminate?

VII. Relationship between BHP Parents and Village Parents

1. Did you have much contact with students' parents in village? (Explore writing, visiting, discussing students' problems.)
2. What did students' parents think of his decision to transfer or terminate?

VIII. Parents' Analysis of Students' Goals

1. Why did student enter the BHP?
2. What does he want to do later on? Where does he want to live? Did you talk to him about his future plans?

IX. Concluding Recommendations

1. What would you recommend to improve the BHP?
2. Do you think you will want to take a student next year? What type of student would you request?
3. Is there anyone else whom we could talk to that would help us understand reason for students' leaving?

BOARDING HOME PROGRAM STUDENT INTERVIEW

This interview guide contains the areas on which it is important to obtain boarding home students' opinions. The specific questions are merely examples. Ask any questions you like in whatever order is most comfortable for you. The important thing is to find out what was bothering the boarding home student in his former home and why he wanted to leave the home and the program.

I. Student's Explanation of Transfer or Termination

1. When did you decide to leave the (home, program)? Could you describe exactly what happened?
2. Why did you decide to leave the (home, program)? Explore the student's reasons. (If he didn't like the way the parents treated him, for example, try to find out exactly what they said or did that made him feel bad.)

II. Problems in Boarding Home Family, School, and Community

1. What problems did you face in school? What didn't you like about school?
2. Did you meet prejudice against Natives from people in the city? Who? What did you do?
3. What didn't you like about the boarding home family? How much work did they ask you to do? What rules did they have?
   (Some of these subjects may have been covered under the section dealing with the student's explanation of his transfer.)

III. Opinion of New Boarding Home and School

(If he is a transfer student, he may have a new boarding home family and he may be going to a new school. Find out how this family is different from the other one and whether he likes it better.)

1. How do you like this boarding home?
2. What do they do that is different from your other boarding home?
3. How do you like this school compared to the one you were going to before?

IV. Friendships

1. Who are your friends here? Which of these are BHP students?
2. Do you see your friends as much as you want to? Why not?
3. Do you have relatives here in town? How often do you see them?

V. Family Pressures and Attractiveness of Village

1. How do you like it in home village?
2. Have you received letters or messages from your parents while you were here? What do your parents think about your leaving?

VI. Personal Goals and Plans for Future

1. What do you want to do later on (jobs, education)?
2. Where do you want to live? Why?
3. When did you first decide to go to high school? Did you attend orientation program?

VII. Concluding Recommendations

1. Looking back, what would you do to make your situation better?
   Looking back, what was good about your situation?
2. What could be done to improve the program for other students?

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